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WAR AGAINST WANT

THE dog—a tired dog—has been shown the rabbit. After last week's debates in Parliament and the Prime Minister's broadcast last Sunday night, the Government can fairly claim that it has presented to this war-weary nation a clear picture of the economic objectives at which it must aim, their relative priorities and, within certain limits, the resources available for their achievement. First in order of importance is the need to provide the exports required to pay for imports of essential foodstuffs and raw materials; next comes the rehabilitation of Britain, including both the rehousing of its people and the making good of accumulated arrears of maintenance of its industrial plant; and finally, there is the gradual restoration of higher standards of personal consumption.

With this order of priorities there will be no serious quarrel: the electorate has too firm a grasp upon realities to be misled by siren voices urging precedence for immediate consumption. It is generally realised that, even if our immediate difficulties are eased by the dollar loan, expansion of foreign trade is the only way to prevent a further deepening of austerity; and, taking the most favourable view of the outlook for exports, we are still not within miles of meeting an import bill which is likely to run at current prices to over £1,700 millions annually, when allowance is made for the cost of Forces abroad. Equally, there can be no question of diverting labour to the production of luxuries, or even "marginal" necessities, until the clamant need for more houses and modern equipment for our mines and factories has been met.

The resources which we can hope to mobilise in what Mr. Attlee has described as a "war against want," were indicated last week by Ministers in terms of estimated distribution of man-power at the end of this year. We bring the figures together, in comparative form, in the accompanying table; the figure which we give of unemployment forecast for the end of 1946 is a residual item which has to be deduced from the remainder. Thus set forth, the man-power budget seems reasonable. It has, of course, to be borne in mind that, if the strength of the Services were to be maintained throughout 1947 at 1,200,000—a figure which would involve compulsory service probably much in excess of two years—it is questionable whether the numbers engaged on munitions could be kept as low as 500,000. Furthermore, unless there are unexpectedly great economies in distribution, the demands of central and local government services and of capital re-equipment will probably result in the figure of those engaged in actual *production* for the home market being much smaller than in 1939. This will be true, even if the total labour force can, in fact, be maintained at 20 millions by the retention in industry of considerable numbers of over-age workers and of women who were employed during, but not before, the war. With these qualifications, if this man-power budget is in fact realised, and bottle-necks in under-manned branches of production avoided, we should be reasonably well placed at the end of this year for the vigorous pursuit of the objectives which the Prime Minister has set before the country.

MAN-POWER BUDGET

MILLIONS

	Mid 1939	End 1946
Armed Services	0.5	1.2
Munitions	1.3	0.5
Export Industries	1.2	1.7
Building and Civil Engineering	1.3	1.4
Home Market Industries and Services	14.2	14.6
Total Civil Employment	16.7	17.7
Unemployed	1.3	0.6
Total Labour Force	19.8	20.0

There remains one big proviso, of which Mr. Attlee was evidently conscious: there is no margin in this budget for slackening of output. On the contrary, none of the targets—export expansion, capital reconstruction, higher personal consumption—will be achieved unless every ounce of national effort is put into the task. What response will there be to the Prime Minister's appeal for harder work and stepped-up production per man-hour? Will the trade union Executives, with whom Ministers discussed in private on Wednesday the Government's economic programme, agree to ask their members to accept continuance of dilution, to put aside claims for shorter hours, and to forgo restoration of many restrictive practices, adopted before the war for the protection of labour, but no longer (it may be argued) applicable to conditions of full employment? In short, will workers generally throughout the country become imbued with the spirit of an economic Dunkirk, and really put their backs into it?

Some response, we have no doubt, there will be to the Prime Minister's appeal. The trouble is that in the "war" to which Mr. Attlee called the country, the enemy is impalpable: "want" is not a tangible substitute for Hitler; and it is also an enemy which can be defeated, so far as the individual is concerned, on a personal, selfish basis. It is idle to ignore the fact that, even when the Government's present programme of nationalisation is completed, 80 per cent. of Britain's economy will still remain in the hands of private enterprise. Nor has the recent tendency of managements to defy Mr. Dalton and distribute earnings more liberally to shareholders gone unremarked.

Apart from the fact that in its new "war" the Government cannot command the solid support of the press which the leadership of the country enjoyed in the summer of 1940, exhortations to greater effort will meet in some quarters with the retort that this is asking people to accept "toil and sweat," not for a people's victory, but for the enlargement of surplus value. This indeed may be the most formidable problem which the Government has to overcome—the discovery of compelling incentives compatible with the principles of gradualist social democracy to which it adheres.

What Has Franco to Fear ?

The cautious phrasing of the Three Power statement on Spain reveals the difficulty that faces all those who detest the Franco regime and seek its replacement by a Republican democracy. What instrument can secure the overthrow of the Caudillo and establish the caretaker administration under which free institutions can be restored ? A diplomatic rupture—and this the statement does not preclude—is a useful gesture only if there exists in Spain an organised force which can capitalise the political isolation of Franco. Economic sanctions, which may come anyway through an international trade union boycott of trade with Spain, would cause more severe hardship to Spain's already impoverished peasants and workers than to Franco's political machine. M. Bidault, it is true, has claimed that Spain offers a threat to peace and may ask for a discussion at the next session of the Security Council. But can U.N.O. find a solution which has evaded the three States most closely concerned with Spanish affairs ? In any case, in spite of compromising documents on Franco's relationship with the Nazis, published this week by the State Department, M. Bidault might encounter serious technical difficulties in stating a case to U.N.O. within the scope of the Charter. What is to be done by those who, like ourselves, feel that it is politically and morally impossible to be silent in the face of Franco's sordid record ? Certainly, Senor Giral's Republican Government might be broadened and given the opportunity to work closely with the united resistance groups organised in the *Alianza Democratica*. But nobody inside Spain can get rid of Franco without the backing of at least part of the Army. If the Three Powers, or U.N.O., can discover what bribe or threat will induce the generals to desert the Caudillo, then a start can be made.

France and Indo-China

Indo-China may soon share the headlines with Indonesia, and for similar reasons. This week Indo-China, south of the 16th parallel, ceases to form part of S.E.A.C., and the French officially will be in control. How far this control will exist is still uncertain ; the French troops have fought their way along the Mekong, but outside this area they will probably meet with considerable resistance. Certainly the Annamese view French "liberation" with a marked lack of enthusiasm ; and, at all events, north of the 16th parallel, the French will find as tough a resistance as the Dutch found in Indonesia. Last August the Annamese constituted themselves as a Republic, known as the Viet-Namh, which comprises Tonkin, Annam and Cochin-China. Two months ago the President, Ho-Chi-Minh, was given a 97 per cent. vote ; he is undoubtedly supported by thousands of politically-conscious Annamese and is reported to have a guerrilla army of 50,000 armed men, many of whom fought bravely in the resistance movement (armed by the Chinese and Americans) against Japan. In the Viet-Namh, the Japanese troops surrendered to the Chinese Commander last September, and the Chinese troops, kept there to disarm the Japanese, are likely to move out shortly as their work is almost finished. During their stay, they have adopted an attitude of friendly neutrality to the Ho-Chi-Minh Government, which has consolidated itself and will fight for its independence. This fight may begin at any time ; the Sino-French Treaty, signed last week, provides for the withdrawal of Chinese troops, for the re-entry of French troops, and for the ending of special concessions held previously by the French in China. This Treaty, has been attacked in some of the Left newspapers in France, where progressive public opinion has mildly protested against this deal at the expense of Annamese independence. But reports from Hanoi, the capital of the Viet-Namh, suggest that a bitter struggle lies ahead. President Ho declares that he will accept nothing less than complete independence and refuses to agree to any French garrisons. The French Administration, which was overwhelmingly pro-Vichy and surrendered to Japan almost without a shot, will find their attempted return fiercely contested.

The Struggle for Manchuria

The Chinese people had always assumed that victory over Japan would mean recovery of Manchuria. Unhappily, while two of the Big Three signed a Secret Treaty which compromised China's position in this area, and China signed a Treaty, under American pressure, giving considerable concessions to the Soviet Union, no joint policy was ever planned for the economic development of Manchuria after Japan's withdrawal. To-day Chinese students are demonstrating in large numbers against both these Treaties on the grounds that they gave too big concessions to the Soviet Union ; they demand the withdrawal of the Red Army, which was originally due to leave on December 3rd, and now seems likely to postpone its withdrawal to June. In this last demand, Chou En-lai, the Communist leader, would seem to agree. He told foreign correspondents in Yenan recently that the sooner the Red Army left Manchuria, the better ; he denied any contact with it. It is reported that clashes have taken place between the Chinese Communists and the Red Army in Manchuria, and that Chinese troops trained in Russia have now appeared, presumably because they will be more amenable to Russia's plans. Meanwhile, the problem of war booty has arisen as an international issue. The Russians removed considerable machinery from Manchuria in the early days of its occupation, and the unilateral economic policy of the U.S.S.R. in this area has provoked the American Note to Moscow and Chungking expressing concern about the possible establishment of an exclusive Soviet-Chinese control over Manchurian enterprises. The Chinese had previously turned down Moscow's proposal for joint Sino-Soviet control of Manchuria's main industries and rejected Moscow's definition of war booty. The importance of these moves must not be overlooked ; Manchuria is the one place where Chinese, Russian and American interests overlap ; it is the test of Soviet-American relations.

Washington and Famine

Sir Ben Smith should have little difficulty in persuading the authorities in Washington that the food situation which confronts the world is critical. The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture has now stated that wheat supplies available for export in the first half of this year will fall short of world needs by no less than eight million tons ; and the latest estimate of the all-India grain deficit is as high as seven million tons. Furthermore, it now seems improbable that the British Zone in Germany can expect any contributions of food from the other Zones. Unhappily, the Combined Food Board in Washington appears to be an instrument quite inadequate to cope with this crisis. As Sir Ben Smith told Parliament last week, the Board has no mandatory or executive power. In the case of "short-supply" foods other than wheat, the Board (which consists of representatives of the U.S.A., Canada, and the U.K.) can *recommend* how supplies should be allocated ; but actual decisions as to allocations are taken by the exporting countries, i.e., the U.S.A. and Canada. In the case of wheat, the Board's practice has been simply to discuss supplies, stocks, and the needs of importing countries. Thus, the effectiveness of international action to mitigate world famine depends essentially on the U.S. Administration. The President's decision to send Mr. Hoover to Europe to study food conditions is welcome ; but there are no indications yet that the new Famine Emergency Committee, of which Mr. Hoover has been appointed chairman, is expected to do more than appeal to the U.S. public for a voluntary tightening of the belt.

Need We Nationalise Anything ?

The opponents of nationalisation are beginning to rally their forces. The Bank of England has been captured, but the old capitalist garrison has been left, with only a few changes, to man the fortress in the service of the conquerors. *Plus ça change*—it may be said ; and yet the change is real, because there is now no doubt that the last word in banking policy rests with the Government and not with the directors, whoever they are. On the coal mines front there is grumbling ; but in general the owners are too anxious to get as much compensation as they can to risk making trouble. Elsewhere, however, the anti-nationalisers are growing more vocal. The railways, after handing out to their shareholders the highest dividends (largely out of back accumulations) that they dared pay, have now been led by Lord Royden, of the L.M.S., in a cry against being taken over. At any rate, it is said, there is no emergency, because the Government has power to continue control for a long time to come. What Lord Royden's argument completely misses out is that one main object—perhaps *the* main object—of public ownership is to make possible a thorough co-ordination of road and rail services. Or perhaps he is only doing his little bit to aid the much more militant campaign which the road transport interests are conducting against nationalisation. What neither of these parties explains is how the road-rail problem is to be settled except on a basis of public ownership. The late Coalition Minister of Transport admitted that it could not be settled on the lines that were under discussion before the war ; and no one appears to have advanced any viable solution except the Labour Party's.

Wages and Wage Policy

The Ministry of Labour has now issued the figures showing the amount of weekly earnings over a large number of industries in July, 1945. It is a pity these figures take so long to compile, though it is easy to understand the difficulty of getting them right with less delay. Their value, in face of the delay, lies in the light they throw on past tendencies. In this instance, most people will probably be surprised to find that average earnings were rather higher in July 1945, despite the termination of hostilities, than they were six months earlier, though not so high as in July, 1944. Reductions in overtime and war piecework earnings were largely offset by increases in wage-rates, leaving only a small net reduction after allowing for the factor of seasonal variation. This is a very different experience from America's, where peace has brought a sharp contraction in earnings. Here, hours of labour are still on the average higher than before the war—47½ hours compared with 46½—and there is little or no tendency for the Trade Unions to press for an early implementation of their general demand for the forty-hour week. Simultaneously with the issue of the official figures the Labour Party has published its "discussion pamphlet"—the second of its new series—called *Fair Shares of Scarce Goods ;* and there has been some attempt to represent this as an attack on Trade Union demands for higher wages. Actually, the pamphlet now repeats what the Trade Union Congress said in its answer to Sir William Beveridge on the question of wages and full employment—namely, that, if the Government would control prices and ensure full employment, "it would be the duty of the Trade Union movement to give suitable guarantees about wage settlements and reasonable assurances that such guarantees would be generally observed." It is obvious that unco-ordinated wage demands, while both goods and labour are scarce, could easily lead to inflation ; and it is not easy to understand why the repetition of the T.U.C.'s own words should now be construed into an attack on the Trade Union movement.

PARLIAMENT: "Expressions of Policy"

Wednesday

MEMBERS who sat through the Manpower and Defence Policy Debates in search of answers to angry Servicemen, were disappointed. Hortation was mingled with statistics: but "Group 45" will continue to write that he is still in C.M.F. doing nothing, and would his Member do something, and when is Group 45 coming out anyway?

On the first day, the Prime Minister, in one of his temperate and encouraging speeches, called on the nation for team-work in a "campaign for prosperity" which would raise consumption. We had to raise output, and use all our manpower resources. Herbert Morrison, to the surprise of Oliver Stanley—who had been about to urge him to go to India and to wish him a delayed return—was equally conciliatory to industry. "The Government wants to co-operate," he said. The question was how much could the nation produce and how quickly. Only when Morrison said that pram-output was up by 60 per cent., and added, "Let us hope that enough bonny wee things are also being produced to fill the prams," was there a movement of impatience throughout the House. "Up by 60 per cent. of what?" asked some, irritated by meaningless statistics. And as for the "bonny wee things"—when politicians look into the cradle, both mothers and fathers may well ask "Why?" Herbert Morrison's interest in the birth-rate was, no doubt, directly related to the shortage of manpower for work, rather than for war. Such is the strain on our labour supply that Peter Thorneycroft made the suggestion (rejected by Cripps) that large numbers of foreign workers should be imported to Britain. Everyone in this debate spoke about the need to raise productivity.

A curious paradox of this debate was the alliance between the Tory front bench and the Labour back bench in urging a national wages policy. For the Tories, it means, of course, a simple stand-still of wages; for the Socialists, it means raising the level of wages in unattractive but nationally important industries in order to redistribute labour. The Government would not commit itself to rejection or acceptance of either course.

If it seemed to some ingenuous Members that the best way to solve the manpower shortage at home was to speed up demobilisation, they were soon disillusioned by the Defence Policy debate. The Premier again spoke, and outlined the commitments of the armed forces. "Commitments" have now taken the place of transport as the regulating factor which decides the rate of demobilisation. "We cannot tell the extent of our commitments," said the Prime Minister. Nor could he tell what our Forces would have to be in future, though it was hoped to reduce them to 1,100,000 by the end of the year.

"Armed forces are expressions of policy." Not Clausewitz, but Attlee affirmed this undeniable military and political truth. Sir Ralph Glyn, Conservative Member for Abingdon, asked for an end to party warfare, since we might all have to fight side by side against somebody else in future. He left no doubt that he meant Russia. Few Members had the forthrightness to mention Russia as the potential enemy. Only Zilliacus (who, quoting Briand, described our foreign policy as that of "a dead dog floating down the stream") had the clarity of mind and sincerity of character to say that a better foreign policy would mean fewer "commitments" and quicker demobilisation. Armed forces may, in the Premier's words, be expressions of policy. But if our expressions of policy are merely armed forces, the outlook is a bad one.

Noel-Baker's reply to Lyall Wilkes on the question of Franco's execution of the Spanish Resistance leader Garcia was, like the Foreign Office Note to Spain, appeasing and unsatisfactory. Franco will, no doubt, take comfort that he can hold out until The War which every Fascist hopes will break out soon between Britain and Russia. Far more heartening to the Labour back-bench and the Labour Movement throughout the country were Hugh Dalton's blunt answers to Keeling, defender of the holders of Japanese bonds, "the men who backed the wrong horse." Dalton is the sort of Socialist Minister whom the country voted for at the General Election.

PHINEAS MINOR

MR. CHURCHILL'S DEFEATISM

SHORN of its characteristic embellishments, Mr. Churchill's speech may be summarised as follows. The old balance of power is gone, and the world is divided into Capitalist and Communist blocs. In order to check the spread of Communism, America and the British Commonwealth must sooner or later become a single union, and should immediately form a military alliance. Since Russia respects strength, it may be possible for this alliance to reach a settlement with the Soviet Union. The otherwise probable war may be averted by this technique, just as war with Germany could have been prevented in the '30s. In any case, all British and American military plans, training and forces should be integrated, and we should hold on like grim death to the exclusive secrets of the atomic bomb.

We shall be surprised if the America of 1946, fast returning to "normalcy," is in a mood to respond to this appeal to take over the commitments and resources of the British Empire. Similarly, social-democratic Britain will not see Mr. Churchill's proposals in the rosy light in which he presents them. In effect, Britain would become the Forty-Ninth State. Unable any longer to defend our own Empire, we should be asking America to do it for us, instead of at long last carrying through that policy of colonial liberation which Socialists have so long promised in Africa, India and South-East Asia. Acceptance of the division of the world into Capitalist and Communist halves would mean that Britain, both for financial and military reasons, would be a satellite of the United States. We should have to give up our independent development towards Socialism, and impotently follow America in the inevitable slumps and booms to which her unrestricted capitalism condemns her. Sooner or later, almost inevitably, a clash would come between the scattered territories of western capitalism and the Soviet Union, extending from Vladivostock to Western Europe. In this conflict the British Isles would be no more than an advanced American bomber base, quickly put out of action by a few casual atomic bombs. The inescapable truth is that there is no future for Britain or for the world unless a settlement is reached with the Soviet Union. If we look at the matter dispassionately, we see that Mr. Churchill assumes that the fatal division between East and West has already taken place, and that we must line up for a conflict in which all our leading statesmen and thinkers, including Mr. Churchill, have seen a return to the Dark Ages.

The Soviet Union has perhaps more to learn from Mr. Churchill than either Britain or the United States. A year ago the U.S.S.R. was on top of the world. Ideological hostility in the capitalist countries was reduced to a minimum, and admiration and friendliness were the common sentiments of the mass of both workers and middle classes in every democracy. The right policy for the Soviet Union seemed obvious, and there was every reason to believe that Stalin intended to adopt it. If Russia had announced her intention of rebuilding her shattered territory, and had been readier to compromise about Germany, the Mediterranean, the Far and Middle East, she would have had nothing to fear either from an exhausted Britain or from a commercially minded America.

Up to the Potsdam Conference, Russia seemed likely to adhere to Stalin's doctrine that Communism must come to the world "by example and not by bayonets." Within her own impregnable frontiers the Soviet Union would have steadily increased her strength and her standard of living. Her planned economy rules out the dangers of unemployment; and if she feared the growth of American imperialism she could rely on the inevitable contradictions of capitalism to weaken America and to advertise the advantages of Socialism to the workers throughout the world. The Soviet Union rightly holds that Federal Socialism offers the only solution to the clash of nationalisms and the contradictions of capitalism. This sound and probably victorious strategy seemed to dominate Soviet counsels when Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met at Yalta. Since Potsdam, for reasons which are not yet clear, the U.S.S.R. has followed a more dangerous course. Whether it was America's refusal of a Soviet loan, America's unilateral policy in the Far East, the Allied monopoly of the atomic bomb, our futile interference in the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, or merely some internal shift in the Kremlin which led to a more doctrinaire policy in the U.S.S.R., we do not know. Certainly, Russia appears to have decided that since America was far from willing to underwrite the British Empire she could safely exert pressure upon it throughout the Middle East. Even in the Far East, where Russia came near to a common-sense compromise with America, her policy in Manchuria to-day seems likely to increase hostility in the United States as well as in China. Her failure to withdraw troops from Persia on the appointed day involves even more serious issues.

Until Russia replies to the British and American Notes, it would be wrong to assume that she intends to stay in Persia. But it is necessary to say that the issue at stake is one of good faith. It is not the fact that Russian troops are in Azerbaijan that is important, but that the Russians explicitly and repeatedly promised to withdraw their troops on March 2nd. They may have excellent reasons for being in Northern Persia; in the long run it may be better that they should be there. Their complaints against the Persian Government are justified, and the Russians have just as much, and as little, right to operate oilfields of Northern Persia and to safeguard their Caucasian frontier as the British and Americans have to exploit oil wells in the South and exercise naval domination of the Persian Gulf. But whatever the excuses, Moscow appears to have opened herself to the charge of ill-faith.

Internationally, the strength of the Soviet Union in the past has been a punctilious insistence that agreements should be honoured to the letter. Since Potsdam it may be argued that they have honoured the letter rather than the spirit of their general pledge not to act unilaterally, but to co-operate in reconstructing Germany and rebuilding Eastern Europe on democratic lines. Now, for the first time, the question of good faith is sharply raised. Once it can be said that the Soviet Union does not keep her promises, the hopes of any general settlement are small indeed.

Mr. Churchill was right in saying that we must seek with patience and understanding a full settlement with the Soviet Union. But to rely on an anti-Soviet military alliance and the exclusive possession of the atomic bomb is a counsel of despair. The right reply for the British Government is that its policy is still to work for genuine Big Three collaboration, and that it does not believe that accommodation is impossible between Soviet Communism, established in countries that have but lately emerged from feudalism, and democratic Socialism as it evolves in the industrial States of Western Europe. It follows that we should make a two-fold proposal to Russia. On the one hand, we should lay before the Soviet Union plans for the international reconstruction of Europe and the Middle East, and invite Russian participation on equal terms. On the other, we should offer to share with Russia the bases that Mr. Churchill wishes to reserve for Britain and America, and invite Russia to join in creating a real International Force, such as Mr. Churchill favours, but postpones, apparently, until after the next war. Such a proposal might now procure a more attentive hearing in Moscow, where the significance of Mr. Churchill's speech will scarcely be missed. Perhaps the Kremlin are becoming aware that, whatever the faults of Anglo-American policy, it is their own recent intransigence that is creating the anti-Soviet bloc that they always feared.

ELAS, THE GERMANS AND THE BRITISH

On Friday, February 1st, 1946, before the Security Council Mr. Bevin said: "I have an independent report which was put to the Trades Union Congress. This report declares that the Elas troops in Greece did not go in pursuit of the retreating Germans, but moved in the opposite direction with the object of seizing power in Athens." And in the House of Commons on Thursday, February 21st, 1946, Mr. Bevin said: "Elas turned against us when we entered Greece. I explained last week that, if Elas had gone through as they had originally promised to go through, it would have been all right: *but when we were marching after the Germans, they were marching back to Athens for civil war.*"

The part Elas played during the last few months of the German occupation in Greece and during the German evacuation has been the subject of much deliberate confusion and has been referred to again and again by Harold Macmillan and others as justification for Mr. Churchill's anti-Elas policy. To examine what really happened is therefore no academic discussion of a closed chapter, but will help us to arrive at a correct evaluation of much of the information on Greece which is still placed at Mr. Bevin's disposal through official sources.

By the time I arrived in Greece during the last weeks of the Occupation, in spite of the inclusion in the Cairo Government of five Eam members, distrust between Elas and the British had reached such a pitch that the British Military Mission in occupied Greece was not regarded as a military mission in aid of the Resistance but merely as a British Intelligence Organisation created to keep the British Government informed of the developing situation so that counter-measures against Elas could be prepared. It must be admitted that the basic distrust of British policy in Greece resulted in behaviour by Elas which made British liaison officers' reports take on a colour which Cairo used at the highest level to justify an anti-Elas policy. This vicious circle went unbroken for three years.

To prevent Elas becoming too strong it had been the policy of G.H.Q., M.E.F., and the Foreign Office during the last year of the German occupation to build up smaller rival guerrilla organisations to help maintain a balance of power amongst the guerrilla groups. To this end the British in March, 1944, had endeavoured to subsidise and aid a guerrilla band—Ekka under Col. Psarros—and had diverted to Gen. Zervas through Preveza much money and equipment. The manifest partiality of British policy had produced protests from British officers; but the most important result of this policy was that Elas, to strengthen its position in this "balance of power" struggle, murdered and destroyed the smaller bands who insisted on remaining "independent" of Elas, i.e., who remained dependent on British support.

Nevertheless, when the worst has been said of Elas, it remains true that in no period of three months during 1943 or 1944 did Elas fail to inflict less than 1,000 casualties on the Germans; and it was their activity or threat of activity which tied down 120,000 German troops in Greece.

On September 6th, 1944, the Germans began their northward evacuation from Greece. On that day they evacuated Kalamata and started to move north. They left much army equipment and food to the 1,200 members of the Security Battalion in Kalamata. An American officer in Greece carried the Elas terms for surrender to the Security Battalion in Kalamata on September 8th. The terms were that the Security Battalion should be disbanded and the rank and file members return to their homes except for those leaders who had committed actual crimes against the Greek population during the German occupation. As a guarantee that no harm should be done to these leaders, Elas had agreed to allow the American officer to stay with them until the arrival in Greece of the Greek Government. These generous terms were refused by Pirotis, their leader in Kalamata. Fighting took place for the town from September 9th to the 11th, and Elas captured the town with only 13 casualties, the leaders of the Security Battalion escaping north into the Royalist town of Meligala.

On September 16th, after the refusal of a similar Elas offer of amnesty to all except the leaders of the Security Battalion in Meligala, and a guarantee that the leaders would be dealt with only by the Greek Government on its return to Greece, fighting took place for Meligala. The fighting was heavy and casualties numbered many hundreds. Prisoners were shot out of hand on both sides.

During the fighting in Kalamata and Meligala British instructions had been not to interfere in the civil war between Elas and the Security Battalions. I am convinced that these instructions were given because it was assumed in Cairo that the Security Battalions could liquidate Elas with the aid of their German equipment. When I had left Cairo in July it had been the opinion of those dabbling in Greek affairs, first, that the Security Battalions were more "pro-British" in essence than Elas and so deserved our support, and secondly, that if it came to a fight they would defeat Elas and so be the only forces in Greece by the time we arrived.

By September 22nd British policy had changed. Contact was now to be made with the Security Battalions. The Security Battalions were, with the aid of Elas, to be confined to barrack areas; Elas was not to be allowed to disarm them, and specific instructions came from Cairo that food and essential provisions were not to be prevented from reaching them. Elas commanders were to be held personally responsible for any murders committed in the areas under their control. Needless to say, Elas regarded these orders as being aimed (as, indeed, they probably were) at protecting the Security Battalions, and their suspicion of British aims in Greece was deepened.

It must be mentioned that in the one town in which the Elas terms were accepted by the Security Battalions—the town of Sparta—not a single murder was committed by Elas, and officers from the Sparta Security Battalion were later to go to Tripolis to plead with their colleagues there to surrender that town, bearing witness to the fact that Elas kept to their terms of surrender when accepted.

By September 20th the Germans had left Tripolis and were making for the Corinth Canal to cross over into the Athens area of the mainland of Greece. Not a shot had been fired at the Germans by Elas in their retreat. British directions to Elas to cease fighting the Security Battalions had been regarded by them as an attempt by the British to enable the Security Battalions to sit pat controlling the towns and the main communication centres in Greece so that, when the British troops arrived, the Security Battalions would still be in strategic control of the political situation. Consequently, all Elas efforts during the first fortnight of the German evacuation were directed towards securing the mastery of the towns, railways and ports of Greece, aimed at preventing the establishment of a British "link-up" with the Security Battalions. This was the reason why Elas concentrated on capturing the towns from the Greek quisling forces instead of attacking the retreating Germans. This is certainly regrettable; but for this situation British policy must bear a heavy responsibility indeed.

Nor did the British Government desire Elas to engage in operations against the Germans, since the political prestige resulting from any such operations was not welcome to the Foreign Office at this period. It was for this reason that, although Elas forces had been placed under direct command of G.H.Q., C.M.F., by the Caserta agreement of September, not a single instruction to Elas asking them to operate against the Germans was issued. From the beginning of the German evacuation on September 6th, until British troops landed at Patras during the first week in October, not a single order to attack the Germans was issued to partisans in the Peloponnese. Indeed, contrary orders were issued, and British officers in Greece passed on to the Elas leaders instructions prohibiting them following the retreating Germans across the Corinth Canal into the Athens area *without Gen. Scobie's express permission.* No such permission was ever granted from Italy by Gen. Scobie, but the Elas leaders, knowing the politics which aimed at preventing them arriving in the Athens area before the arrival of the British, continued to press on after the retreating Germans in the direction of Athens.

The Germans left Athens on October 13th. Elas entered a few hours later. For three days Elas was in sole control of the city, and it made not the slightest attempt to seize power, but lined the quay at Piraeus and cheered the arrival of British troops on October 16th. After their arrival it was never British policy to use Elas in any way to attack the Germans, nor in fact was it British policy to engage in any action with the Germans at all, but merely to follow them in their northward trek and occupy the country. The total casualty figures suffered by the British forces in action with the Germans in Greece after October 16th would make interesting reading. On the arrival of Gen. Scobie, Elas offered to go to Crete and engage the Germans in that island, but this offer was refused, since this would have interfered with the British determination that Elas should be disarmed as quickly as possible—the date for such disarmament having been fixed for December 10th.

In pursuance of our policy of neither attacking the Germans ourselves nor using Elas to do so, Gen. Scobie addressed Elas leaders in Corinth on October 24th, 1944, excusing his policy as follows:

> The Germans are being chased from Epirus. I hope that before long we shall have completely cleared them from Salonika and Macedonia. I know you are eager to continue the fight, but there is not time to get into contact with the enemy before he crosses the Yugoslav border, where he will be suitably dealt with by our gallant Allies—the Yugoslavs and the Russians.

Throughout November, as the Germans went north, Elas took over territory in the wake of the Germans. A few hours or sometimes days later British troops would arrive. On December 1st Gen. Scobie issued a proclamation stating that Elas must be disarmed by December 10th in accordance with the Greek Cabinet's decision. This demand and this issue produced the protest demonstration on December 3rd, the indiscriminate shooting by the Athens police and the outbreak of civil war. I would add, however, that, after the shooting in Constitution Square, the British were cheered by Eam crowds whenever they appeared on the streets until as late as December 5th. Elas-Eam went to pathetic lengths to make it quite clear that they wanted no trouble with the British and that their quarrel was entirely with the Greek Government.

Finally, although sporadic fighting had begun on December 2nd, three or four days elapsed before fighting in Athens took on a general character. For many days after that Elas troops were converging from all directions on to Athens from the rural areas of Greece; but it seems to me that, if the story told by Mr. Bevin is true—i.e., that the gigantic Eam demonstration was the carefully prepared signal for civil war—then, had that been the case, Elas would have had their troops already inside the city to take over within a few hours that absolute power which such a plot could so easily have made theirs.

LYALL WILKES

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NEW STATESMAN AND NATION
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A LONDON DIARY

A FRIEND who is in close touch with events in Washington tells me that the betting is rather in favour of the loan going through. The Administration is doing its best. But then, as he says, the Administration is allowing power to slip from its hands. The resignation of Ickes, the probability that Pauley will be rejected by the Senate, and the President's failure to deal with strikes show that Congress and the pressure groups have got quite out of hand. The Administration's efforts to regain power, my friend remarks, are rather like "picking up an ice-cube with red-hot tongs." Power melts away, and the old buccaneering days of American politics seem to be coming back. Ickes' reference to Secretary Fall, the Teapot Dome and the Harding era was a characteristic tap on a sore nerve with an Ickesian sledge-hammer. But Ickes is not the only person to talk about Truman as "an honest Harding." No one doubts his personal integrity, but the fact that people keep harping on it shows what they think of some of his cronies. Obviously the President's attempt to get a job for Pauley has lengthened the tongue of gossip. He was a partisan in an oil case which vitally affected the Navy, and it is not obvious that he has qualities beyond those needed by the Treasurer of the Democratic Party, which are chiefly bar-room charm and skill in various types of persuasion. George Allen, my friend adds, who is the head of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, "has some of the popular wise-cracking talents of Tommy Trinder though it is not certain that he is better qualified than Trinder would be to handle $15 billion of public money." With Ickes gone, as he always said he would "when the plunderbund comes in," the New Deal remains embodied only in Henry Wallace. Can it be revived? Not, I should guess, during a boom, and the boom will continue for some time longer. The chances are therefore strong that American voters will go further Right in November, and elect a Right-wing Administration in 1948.

* * *

It must have been about 1942 that I started to implore the authorities to divide and sift German prisoners so that we should know on what Germans we could rely to help in overthrowing Nazi-ism and in administering post-war Germany. It was not until near the end of the war that the job was seriously undertaken and it is only now, in 1946, that the public is allowed to know that P.o.W.s are not all equally damned as Huns, but capable of division into Blacks (confirmed Nazis), Whites (confirmed anti-Nazis) and Greys, who are regarded as capable of re-education. The process of training the Greys (with the aid of the Whites) is now being carried out, under admirable direction, at Wilton Park Training Centre near Beaconsfield. It is a fascinating enterprise about which I hope before long to write at some length. It is worth noticing that the P.o.W.s, who are being given the chance to learn how German history looks to the rest of the world and to regard themselves as political leaders of a more decent Germany, study and argue, with complete freedom, in an ordinary prison camp.

* * *

Knowing that in fact anti-Nazi P.o.W.s in this country have had no special privileges during this war, I was a good deal surprised at a recent press ramp which alleged that repatriated German prisoners were found to be in possession of British rationed goods, such as dried eggs and clothes. The newspapers said that these P.o.W.s had been given clothing coupons, money and ration cards in exchange for broadcasting to Germany during the war. The suggestion was that these Germans who talked in the B.B.C. Prisoner of War Programmes were bribed to do so. Actually, the few Germans who got special privileges were doing special, secret work for the Foreign office. Those who broadcast openly over the B.B.C. and United Nations networks received no special privileges or remuneration. Ever since the *first* P.o.W. broadcasts started in summer, 1943, the Talks were given by men who acted from sincere anti-Nazi conviction. They planned and organised these broadcasts on their own initiative and expressed their own faith. They were kept in ordinary P.o.W. camps behind wire in this country and had not one ounce more to eat or a penny-more to spend than any P.o.W. who worked on the land. Many of them had been in concentration camps for years and had been captured from political punishment battalions. They needed no bribes to make them anti-Nazis.

* * *

I am delighted to hear that Quo Tai-chi has been appointed China's permanent member of the Uno Security Council. Many English people will recall that he was Ambassador here during the difficult days when Britain hesitated to aid China against Japan; they may remember his remarkable farewell broadcast when he left England in 1942 to be Foreign Minister in Chungking. Unhappily Quo fell a victim to the oddly personal politics of China, and after only a few months of office (during which he declared war on Germany and Italy) he retired into obscurity and lived the life of a recluse on the outskirts of Chungking. His appointment at length does justice to one of China's best public servants. Quo first made a reputation when, in the days of the Manchurian "incident," he stood up to the Japanese, in company with Dr. Wellington Koo, at Geneva; and, amongst my many Chinese friends, I have known none who so well understood the British and appreciated our way of life. I hope his appointment also signalises a more liberal phase of Chinese policy.

* * *

In my childhood A.G.G. of the *Daily News* was a household name, standing for all that was best in Liberal journalism. Though he was a Socialist, my father always read the *Daily News* to see what Gardiner would write about the House of Lords or Women's Suffrage or Home Rule. I remember, too, how delighted my father and mother were with his book of essays—to-day we should call them "profiles"—entitled *Prophets, Priests and Kings*. When I read it myself years later, I thought it very workmanlike but rather thin. On one occasion I remember A.G.G. really letting himself go. He wrote a pamphlet in 1914 attacking Northcliffe and the *Daily Mail*. He accused Northcliffe of making the Boer War, and declared that he was as responsible as the Prussian Junkers for creating the atmosphere in which all attempts at settlement between England and Germany broke down. It was a really savage and effective piece of writing. A.G.G. resigned from the editorship of the paper because he did not share the proprietors' confidence in Lloyd-George. But he was not a man who ceased to have an interest in life when he was freed from the pressure of politics and journalism. He had wisely avoided the Fleet Street trap; his love of mountains and sport, his books and music remained. He did not need to write paragraphs or leading articles about them.

* * *

One of the peculiarities of English politics has always been the degree of influence that could be attained by private organisations, run usually by a single-minded secretary who did not doubt that the reform for which he worked would ensure the country's salvation. The other day we lost such an able and disinterested Secretary in the death of John Humphreys who lived for the cause of Proportional Representation. Thank goodness he failed to persuade either the Conservatives or the Labour Party that they would gain by a system of mathematically just representation that would have prevented us ever having a Government with an adequate majority with which to govern. How important this British rejection of democratic logic has been I realised more clearly than ever when I was recently in Belgium. When a real issue arises P.R. prevents decision and condemns countries to political deadlock and often (pre-war France is a classical example) discredits democracy by making all Governments feeble and unstable.

* * *

"This will be a roaring success with a working-class audience," said the trade union leader who sat next to me at the Scala the other night. There's certainly a good deal of fun in *Century for George*, the play Montagu Slater wrote for the centenary of the A.E.U. *Theatre* '46, the new company led by Bernard Miles and Jenny Laird, seems to be making a bid for a new kind of audience. In this repertory season at the Scala, they are putting on a comedy about the Home Guard, written by Miles himself, and a documentary play about coal by Jack Lindsay and B. L. Coombes. I think our wartime experience has shown that there's room for this sort of experiment on the London stage. On Monday night, the theatre was full of journalists, trade union officials, a number of prominent Civil Servants, some members of the Government and quite a few artists and writers. Things are stirring when an audience like this attends the first night of a proletarian *Cavalcade*.

* * *

If I could believe that the code-name wallahs who insisted on spelling "Habakkuk" with two b's and one k ever consulted the Old Testament, I could imagine that the project for the iceberg aircraft carrier owed its name to the prophet who said: "Behold, ye among the heathen, regard and wonder marvellously, for I will work a work in your time which ye will not believe, even though it be told you." That would certainly have been the effect on the Nazis if a man-made, Diesel-engined, 2,000,000-ton iceberg had suddenly materialised off the coast of Normandy and had vomited 200 Spitfires out of its innards. The idea of using ice as a structural material for a floating airfield originated in the fertile imagination of Mr. Geoffrey Pyke, the Director of Programmes under Lord Louis Mountbatten. The irreverent staff of Combined Ops. christened it "H.M.S. Hokey-Pokey," or "The Frozen Halibut," or "The Frozen Hermit." Another appropriate name was "The Pykeraft"—which recalled not only the name of the inventor, but also that other hollow vessel invented by Mr. H. G. Wells—Pycraft, the fattest clubman in London, who insisted on taking a Hindu recipe to reduce his weight, and finished up floating like a balloon on the ceiling. The 2,000,000-ton "Pykeraft," however, never got as far as floating. Mr. Churchill sanctioned it in 1942. Experiments were carried out by British, Canadian and American scientists and engineers—very useful experiments into the nature and possibilities of ice as a structural material, including the production of an ice-plastic, "Pykrete," made of wood pulp and water. The Chiefs of Staff decided it would not be needed for the invasion of Europe, and anyway it was going to cost £10,000,000, and meant shipping scarce men and materials to the Arctic.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Basil Clarke.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

As Secretary of the British Snail-Watching Society I must protest against Frances Pitt's light-hearted nature story about the way of a thrush with a snail. Such matters must be recorded objectively in natural history books but the snail's unpleasant fate should not be treated semi-humorously to make a Roman or any other kind of holiday.—Letter in *Sunday Graphic*.

Does Lady travelling home one night with bottle of sherry and Apocryphal Bible remember long conversation with travelling companion who hereby confesses with shame having advanced blasphemous theories, and has now bitterly repented of them?—Advt. in *Brighton Evening Argus*.

The chairman said that he had been served by a young woman who was smoking while handling food, but as she called him "dear," he did not like to report her.—*Derby Evening Telegraph.*

At the bottom of the ladder, character tests on the new model have been held and new blood may be flowing in. But this will, as has happened hitherto, congeal into the old mould unless there is some drastic pruning at the top.—*Economist.*

In the midst of troubled Bombay to-day there was one haven of peace and quiet; it was the Cricket Club of India, whose ground is in the Fort area. There, play in the zonal cricket tournament continued uninterrupted on the smooth green turf.—*Belfast Telegraph.*

In a South Wales valley, often flooded, the local council put up this sign:

"Notice is hereby given that when this board is under water this road is impassable.—*Evening News.*

INDIA'S TWO NATIONS

Lahore. By Air Mail.

THE severest critics of British rule concede that it has brought one indisputable gain to India. It gave it one system of defence, and made of it a single area of internal free trade. How much of all this can survive, if Mr. Jinnah achieves his goal and carves out of India his sovereign, independent, Muslim State of Pakistan? In this dangerous world it is inevitable that we should scrutinise this project closely from the standpoint of India's safety and our own. If Pakistan and Hindustan were to follow distinct, and it might be contrary, foreign policies, a new factor of danger and discord would be introduced into the affairs of Asia. Pakistan would gravitate towards the Muslim States of the Middle East, while Hindustan would look to the East. Each, in so doing, must adjust itself in its own way to the orbits of the three dominant Great Powers.

This problem is complicated by the geographical peculiarity of Pakistan, as Mr. Jinnah has conceived it. The Muslim population of Northern India is concentrated in two solid areas, but between the North-Western area and Eastern Bengal stretches a predominantly Hindu region that measures nearly a thousand miles. How these two separated fragments of Pakistan could concert their mutual defence, unless Hindustan were their intimate ally, is the first of several puzzles that confront us. Facing North and West, with Afghanistan and the Soviet Union as its neighbours, Pakistan would have in its keeping the gates of the whole Indian Peninsula. Could it alone bear the financial weight of this burden, which hitherto has fallen on all India? Again, while this North-Western region includes in its population several traditionally "martial races," its economic potential is negligible. It is a rich agricultural region, but it has and can have no heavy industry of its own. For that, Hindustan alone possesses the necessary raw materials and the technical development.

It is clear, then, that Pakistan could not stand on its own feet as an isolated strategical unit. Nor would its economic plight be enviable, if it were to weaken or sever the economic ties that link it to-day with the industries and markets of Hindu India. If the Muslims of these two regions cannot bring themselves to enter an All-Indian Federal Union, their safety and their welfare seem to require at least a common foreign policy, a close military alliance and a customs union with Hindustan.

The case for Pakistan is psychological. No one who has watched these bitter elections can fail to realise that the Muslims are bent on setting up in India a State which they will control and shape as a reflection of their own way of life. Mr. Jinnah's thesis that there are two distinct nations in India is an exaggeration of the platform. By descent most Indian Muslims are converts from Hinduism, and the villagers among them retain much of their inherited outlook and speak in their homes the same languages as their Hindu neighbours. But it would be equally false to argue that as yet a single Indian nation exists. Western education has done much to create it and the common opposition to alien rule has done more. But the Hindu institution of caste, with all the obstacles to social intercourse it involves, is still, though it is decaying rapidly, a deadly obstacle to unity. At railway stations Hindus and Muslims, packed together in overcrowded trains, must still drink from separate water-taps, and even in the modern luxury of New Delhi there are separate restaurants in the Legislative Assembly for the members of the two creeds. On the other side of the barrier, Hindus are aware that Muslims have not wholly lost their traditions of conquest. As modern life flings the two peoples together, the bar on intermarriage makes many domestic tragedies.

More decisive, however, than this social tension is the Muslim fear of the economic ascendancy of the Hindus. The Muslims were much slower in welcoming Western education and they are painfully conscious of their backwardness. The Hindus, with the Parsees, come near to monopolising banking, insurance and large-scale industry. This is no new fact, for the Mogul Emperors always relied on Hindus as their Finance Ministers. The Islamic prohibition of interest is part of the explanation, but the broad fact is that wealthy Muslims are usually feudal magnates, who invest their surplus not in industry but in land. Muslims complain bitterly that Hindu banks rarely employ a Muslim clerk, and they can point to a city which contains eighty cotton mills where not one Muslim manager is to be found, though a third of the workers are Muslims. British policy has tried to correct this inequality by fixing a ratio in the public services which must be reserved for Muslim candidates. The level of efficiency has suffered in consequence. Even more dubious is the principle now adopted, that no licences shall be issued to new Hindu industrial concerns until a due proportion of Muslim undertakings has been approved.

From this inferior position Muslims see in Pakistan a way of escape. The expedient they favour is to build up an ambitious structure of socialised industries and banks, which are to be run mainly by Muslims, scanty though their experience may be. This idea has been fostered by the curious working alliance which now links the Communists with the Muslim League. Capital has no religion, not even on the banks of the Ganges; nor is there any evidence that Hindu financiers promote Hindu communal interests. But they do tend to employ their own kinsmen and friends. That fact, together with the technical backwardness of the Muslims, made a foundation on which it was easy for propaganda to foster among the Muslims a nightmare dread of Hindu economic power.

This dread accounts for the rejection by the Muslims of a federal solution, when they face the fact that Hindus outnumber them by three to one. Here they are the victims of an illusion. On few, if any, of the real issues of daily life in India—the battle with illiteracy, the struggle with malaria and malnutrition, the problem of the slums, the elimination of the functionless landlord, irrigation and the rest—are men divided by their creeds. The Muslim peasants and workers have the same interests as their Hindu neighbours. But, ranged as they have been for forty years in separate electorates based upon religion, the interests which unite them have been obscured and their communal divisions have become an obsession. Once that fatal decision to classify them by religion for political purposes was taken by their British rulers, the theory of the Two Nations was a logical consequence and Pakistan the natural conclusion. Since Muslims cannot, as such, consent to be voted down by Hindus, any federal constitution based on majority decisions had to be rejected. In vain does Congress offer every conceivable legal safeguard for the rights of minorities: in vain does it offer to any discontented province within the Federation the right of secession—a formidable counter with which to bargain. There will be no federation so long as Mr. Jinnah retains his absolute control over the main body of the Muslims.

Of the prospects of a Muslim-Hindu agreement I do not find it easy to think hopefully. Neither in my own first-hand impressions of Mr. Jinnah's mood and personality nor in his public utterances can I find any hint of a readiness to compromise. He has said so flatly that he will not enter any interim National Government that it is hard to see how he could unsay it. He has made it equally clear that the Muslim League will not enter any All-Indian Constitution-making body. Pakistan will set up its own Constituent Assembly; but, before that can happen, its frontiers must first be drawn. My guess is that Mr. Jinnah expects the British Government to draw them. That will be, for any arbiters bold enough to undertake it, a task of excessive difficulty. Can Pakistan exist without the Frontier Province? Yet this solidly Muslim province has just confirmed its Congress Ministry in office by a comfortable majority. Would East Bengal, an impoverished Muslim region, be capable of independent life if it were separated from the great port of Calcutta and the industrial region of Western Bengal? But their populations are by decisive majorities Hindu. In justice to Sikhs and Hindus it is equally clear that the Punjab, the core and focus of Pakistan, would have to be divided. The remnant that would be left on any impartial finding would bear little resemblance to the mighty Muslim State Mr. Jinnah's followers have imagined. Would they take it on these terms? And if not, would they resist?

So the argument turns in a circle. When we realise that fear is the parent of Pakistan, it follows that only an act of generosity could remove it. The wisest course that Congress could take might be, by a magnanimous gesture, to offer Pakistan to the Muslims. This, after its successes in the elections, it could do with a good grace. Unfortunately, it would have to burden its offer with conditions that might destroy its psychological value. It would have to insist on arbitration, presumably by an international commission, for the drawing-up of the frontiers. It would expect, even if it did not demand, an agreement on defence, communications and Customs. In other words, it might regretfully consent to divide India, in the hope of restoring its effective unity by a series of agreements on matters of common interest. But dare it act in this big way?

Men's tempers are rising and threats of revolt are coming now from the Muslim League, as well as from Congress. It has been in the past an intensely respectable and law-abiding body. Mr. Jinnah is a lawyer who believes in constitutional methods. His leading supporters are feudal magnates who are not of the type that risks imprisonment. But during the war the League expanded into a mass-organisation, and in some districts it has been permeated by the Communists. They are not hampered by any inhibitions, and manifestly they are driving the Muslim masses towards direct action. This is happening under the shadow of famine. The Government has cut rations to the level of bare survival—1,500 calories—or below it. Such drastic measures may be necessary, but they could be enforced only by a representative National Government that had the masses behind it. Prestige and moral authority the present nominated Government lacks entirely, and no one believes in its efficiency. I am sure that the personal influence of Mr. Gandhi will be used for peace. None the less, it is a potentially revolutionary situation that confronts us, and a solution must be found not in months but in weeks. In this stricken land the "two nations" that chiefly concern us are its hungry masses and the sated few.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

EXTRA-SPECIAL AREA

[The following article continues our series of first-hand reports on various areas of post-war Britain. Former articles were "Stepney" by Ritchie Calder (Jan. 26th), "Manchester" by P. J. Monkhouse (Feb. 16th), "The Potteries" by Norman MacKenzie (Feb. 23rd).]

THE war brought many things to Merthyr Tydfil. First, it brought work. It drew this incarnation of unemployment, this special area within a special area, out of the Slough of Despond. It brought, or greatly hastened the bringing, of new, more varied and lighter industries to supplement coal and to replace the smelting of iron and steel, dead here since the great Dowlais works of Guest, Keen's closed twenty years ago. It brought to a head, here as elsewhere, the man-power crisis in the mines. And it brought women workers into the factories.

This last change may turn out to be the most revolutionary and the most permanent of all. Before the war, it was very rare for a woman to work in a factory at all in this part of Wales; for a married woman, practically unknown. It needed the urgency of war, driven home by a good deal of canvassing, to bring them in. But they came; they have modified the whole basis of Merthyr's social economy; and it looks as if they may play an even bigger part industrially in the coming years than they have done yet.

In July, 1938, a year before war began, there were less than two thousand women and girls registered for work at the Merthyr employment exchange (which covers Merthyr itself, Dowlais, and the Taff valley down to Treharris). Nearly all of them were working in shops, hotels, the preparation of food and drink, as clerks or in personal service; what one might call traditional women's work. No class of manufacturing industry employed as many as fifty. By July, 1945, there were more than five thousand registered, and all but half of these were working in factories.

A good part of the women were married. This was a clean break with the Welsh tradition, by which—for far longer and far more closely than in England—a married woman was virtually confined to (even if supreme in) the work of her household. This was small wonder in the old days, when all the work to be had was coal or steel; neither had room for women, and both were so exacting that a man coming home from his day's toil could fairly claim to take no share in the work of the house. This clear division persisted in most households through the depression, when many of the men had little enough work to do; to this day, many wives in the mining villages (as the organisers of women's clubs have found) are steadfast in declining any activity, even an occasional meeting, at the time when their husbands will be coming home for their tea. But the war has torn a big breach in that wall.

Since the summer, the number of women actually employed has fallen abruptly with the closing of war-time plants; the wives have gone home. But the new industries which are expected in Merthyr in the next twelve months will make a bigger demand than ever for women workers. The factories which came during, or just before, the war employed women indeed, but nearly twice as many men as women. The factories now coming will employ over two women for every man.

An example: on the site of the old Cyfarthfa ironworks has been built a modern factory which during the war made tank and aircraft parts. It employed about 2,000 workers, of whom two-thirds were men. It has closed down. The site has been taken by a firm of toy manufacturers, who will employ about five hundred in the first instance, perhaps 1,500 later if all goes well. Only half these will be men.

A firm making women's stockings came to Merthyr just before the war; roughly half its four hundred odd workers are men. It is soon to start a new plant for making knitted underwear, with a labour force of 1,100, almost all women. A war-time factory for carbon batteries, which took a fair number of men, has closed; an electric lamp company, expected soon, will take perhaps five to seven hundred workers, almost all women. A firm making thermostatic equipment has already begun in a small way; it will also employ five to seven hundred at peak two-thirds women. A button factory, started by Czech directors in 1939, employs mainly women and juveniles.

The strongholds of male labour remaining are an I.C.I. ammonia plant, a war-time development, the future of which has not been determined; a factory built in 1938 (under the Development Area scheme) to make telephone accessories, but now mostly engaged on agricultural machinery, and using 70 per cent. of men; a small foundry and repair shop, relic of the great Dowlais steel works, with about 250 men; and of course the mines. It is therefore no great wonder that the borough council at Merthyr, in spite of the new industries acquired, is pressing the Board of Trade for more—especially something for men.

There is no real ground for thinking that Merthyr will fall back into the terrible condition of ten or twelve years ago. That was the bottom. Iron and steel had gone. The mines were working irregularly, and the miners' minimum wage had dropped to £2 12*s.* a week. There were no other major industries. Dowlais at one time had more than seven men out of ten workless; Merthyr itself was little better. For a decade, the *lowest* figure of juvenile unemployment was 64 per cent. The town seemed dying. Between the wars, the population dropped by 15,000. Those who could, the young people, escaped to the Midlands.

Unemployment is rising again uncomfortably now, as men return from the Services; there were over 2,500 out in January. There is no real prospect of a return to the worst days. The danger now is rather of lop-sided and misshapen development, introducing new social problems as it solves the old ones. It will embitter the lives of many families if the wives and daughters can get work while the men can't.

It is impossible at this point to escape the question, "Why are there, then, 2,500 men unemployed in Merthyr, while the mines are calling out for every man they can get?" Some of these, certainly, are ex-miners now medically unfit for the pits. But many (ex-miners among them) are quite fit. Though there is work for every miner, the number of men and boys registered as mine-workers has dropped from eight thousand in 1938 to five thousand to-day, and a fair number of those are not expected to stay when the Essential Work Order ceases to apply to mining.

Coal has got such an ill name that, as Dr. Johnson would have said, no one would go down a coal mine who had contrivance enough to get into a jail. If you ask an ex-miner if he is going back to coal, his negative is often almost neurotic in its vehemence. The drying-up of new recruits is notorious. The Juvenile Employment Board placed last year 433 boys. Only 36 came forward for mining, and six of these were rejected on medical grounds. The thriving Junior Technical School (which grew out of a Mining Institute) has over 300 full-time students; not one of them studies mining. Some collieries even find it hard to get colliers on their strength to step up into the more responsible jobs—firemen, overmen and the like. Yet mining still employs at least a third of the men of Merthyr, many of them working in adjacent areas, and going each day by bus or train to work.

Mining, sure enough, has always been a thankless job; arduous, dangerous, uncomfortable, often ill-paid and intermittent. But a generation ago these things did not keep men out of the pits; and in many ways they are better now. Wages are nearly double what they were in the depression; work is regular. Occupational diseases—silicosis, nystagmus, pneumokoniosis—still threaten the miner, but they are better understood, more quickly diagnosed and treated, and better compensated, than ever before. Some men say that the mechanical coal-cutters (and the proportion of coal so cut has risen in South Wales by perhaps 50 per cent. during the war) have robbed the skilled collier of interest in his job; an old miner told me that "the soul had gone out of mining." Maybe, all the expressed reasons are merely rationalisations of an underlying hostile attitude, generated during the long anguish of the depression. But it clearly embarrasses Merthyr, in asking for more work for men, to have its leading industry under-manned.

There is, furthermore, a certain collective uneasiness in Merthyr. Apart from the hardships which unemployment may cause to individuals, the suspicion has been voiced that the Government would like to keep the town on short commons, until the population dwindles still more, and the town can be deprived of its status as a county borough, and merged into Glamorgan. This fear, too, may be a survival from the depression, but it clings, and every hitch or halt in re-development revives it.

I must mention as a postscript one more aspect of the town's life which has been changed by the war. In 1930, an Educational Settlement was established in Merthyr, to serve as a centre of Unemployed Men's Clubs, and did in fact build up a planetary system of men's and women's clubs, in the outlying mining villages rather than in the town itself. A similar centre grew out of an unemployed men's club started by the Friends in Dowlais. In bringing full employment to Merthyr, the war washed out the original reason for the clubs. But they had by that time taken pretty firm root, over a circumscribed field, and the organisation is carrying on. Leaning rather to adult education and to cultural activities (classes in art, music, crafts, drama, languages), it has done a good deal to enhance the amenities and to develop the social life of the valley, and many people would feel its loss acutely if it came to an end. The future of the Settlements is now uncertain; they have been told that the grants they have been getting (from the old Special Areas Commissioner's fund) will end after this year, and it is not clear what will take the place of this fund, or how far Merthyr is now considered able to look after this kind of thing for itself without assistance.

PATRICK MONKHOUSE

ARMY EDUCATION

What's the Army's occupation
  In the Occupation Zone?
It's exchange of education
  In Hamburg and Cologne.
All join classes as time passes,
  All are learning by degrees—
"Guten Morgen, gnädig's Fraülein,
  Will you teach me German, please?"

It's the Army's occupation
  In the Army of the Rhine
To distract the population
  From the Nazi Party line.
It is prudent for the student
  To give lessons in control—
"Guten Morgen, schönes Fraülein,
  Will you take a little stroll?"

In the work of Occupation
  Politics are set aside,
With the art of conversation
  All the Army's occupied.
Many Tommies show great promise
  And quite fluently they chat—
"Guten Morgen, liebes Fraülein,
  What about a little frat?"

In the task of Occupation
  They are breaking with the past,
And there's every indication
  That their progress has been fast.
In the courses for the Forces
  Such a lot have learned to say,
"Ach, Ich liebe dich, mein Liebling.
  Will you marry me one day?"

SAGITTARIUS

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH died in the early morning of last Saturday, March 2nd, in his eighty-first year. As a young man he had known Whitman and Matthew Arnold; his contemporaries at Harvard were Berenson and Santayana; at Oxford he was a favourite of Jowett; in middle-age he was the friend of Henry James and Robert Bridges, of Edmund Gosse and George Moore. In the last months he was particularly interested in young writers—John Russell, Stuart Preston, John and James Pope-Hennessy, Trevor-Roper and Veronica Wedgwood—in Edith Sitwell's poetry also, and the literary prospects of Sir Kenneth Clark. The day before he died he rang up a friend to demand the fullest information about George Orwell, whose *Animal Farm* had just captivated him. "Who is he? What is he like?" "I'll tell you all about him at tea to-morrow," replied the friend, and the voice that sixty years before had been asking the same question about Walter Pater protested: "No. Tell me now." I mention this to show how impossible it is in a few words to convey anything of that immense magical continuity of being which is the attribute of great age. Pearsall Smith was not just an extraordinarily rich and complicated personality, he was that personality receding back through generations, he was "Logan" a name consistently conveying the same highly concentrated and specialised flavour to people long since dead who remembered the 18th century, to their children, and to their grandchildren now middle-aged, and to the very young. This Logan-note sounded like the ring of a fine glass through all his mutations of personality: it was his own unique resonance—a perpetual warm ironical appreciation of life heightened by a never-failing passion for the best in literature and the human heart. This quality of mind owed something to the discrepancies of his character. The big, rather callow, young American, brought up in an atmosphere of religious revivals—his parents were successful evangelists—against a background of puritanism and the family business, deliberately chose for himself the sceptical Epicurean philosophy of Horace and Montaigne and the dedicated literary life of Flaubert and Henry James, yet, while he settled happily into them, his native puritanism and no little of his native worldliness were constantly breaking through. Some of the aggression which might have been employed in making money went into the elaborate teasing of his friends, and a relic of puritanism made him censorious of the ways we earn our livings—yet they also contributed to his moral force and gave to his serene sunny philosophy that energy which Epicureanism often lacks and which chiefly distinguishes the true artist from the man of taste. In his old age a mysterious rhythm of elation and depression gained increasing hold on him; in his "up" periods he joked and talked and went out and rearranged those elaborate sagas about his friends which were his contribution to the study of the nature of personality; in his "down" ones he would groan ironically about the fate of the world and read, read, read—absorbing and digesting his chosen author like a python, extracting his inner nature from the verbiage, sifting all the facts and theories and appreciations of him which other critics had compiled, extracting one or two precious tit-bits, the very marrow and pope's nose of his subject, into little black notebooks whence they would be disinterred to provide an astonishing epithet or a disintegrating adverb. Then during the between-stage when the bell-note of his glass rang out with its clearest and most seductive music, he would write some long essay in which the gleanings of his dark winter hibernations were set down in those long shining sentences, where intelligence and feeling and scholarship and strange bleak flashes fetched from his spiritual underworld were integrated into that peculiarly radiant prose, so limpid and seeming-artless, so penetrating in insight, so warm in texture, which constituted his own secret weapon against chaos and time. Two weeks before his death, a friend asked him half-jokingly if he had discovered any meaning in life. "Yes," he replied, "there is a meaning, at least, for me, there is one thing that matters—to set a chime of words tinkling in the minds of a few fastidious people." "And the State, Logan," the friend went on "the Family, the International Situation, Russia, India?" Propped up on his pillows he waved all this away with his hand, "A chime of words," he repeated, "a few discriminating people."

Well, Flaubert said, in almost those words, that nothing in this world is worth doing except the turning of a perfect sentence and Pearsall Smith was well aware that he was working out his destiny as surely as the almond tree blossomed along the terrace or the great planes by his "bench of desolation" in the Hospital garden put out their summer shade. Let us consider how much he succeeded.

In the earlier part of his life his friends were chiefly scholar-artists, and came from academic circles; later on he preferred artist-scholars, and became himself more purely creative, and there were always some poor lame ducks of literary journalists whose complicated backslidings he would patiently take in hand. After beginning with some poems and short stories the scholar-artist spent years preparing his *Life of Sir Henry Wotton*. In 1918 the artist-scholar appeared with *Trivia* and *More Trivia* which won him a small, but choice and enduring reputation; the scholar-artist then took over with anthologies of Donne's and Jeremy Taylor's sermons (both of whose virtues he was largely responsible for re-discovering), of English prose and of English aphorisms, and with an anthology of Santayana (the philosopher whose doctrine of essences most appealed to him and whose work gave him a certain platonic fervour of belief, an idealism which went far beyond his epicurean temperament), and with his books on the English language. For Pearsall Smith was a word-addict who, like Valéry, worshipped the "*honneur des hommes, Saint Langage*," and he wrote about words in *Words and Idioms* and *The English Language* with the same learned and infectious passion with which they always served him. One might complete his scholarly works by mentioning his exquisite *On Re-reading Shakespeare*, his Milton and his book of essays *Reperusals* where is distilled, in essays on Montaigne, Sainte-Beuve, Madame de Sévigné, and other favourites, some of the finest essence of his mind.

The artist returned with two more books; his autobiography *Unforgotten Years*, which won him fame, where he had always maintained a fine reputation, in America, and with his *Aphorisms* which are among the most perfect of their kind, and where all his conflicting qualities—his loves and his hates, his affections and severities—are resolved into a marmoreal wisdom. Finally an exquisitely revised edition of *All Trivia* and the *Aphorisms* appeared just before his death.

One likes to think that he had this last satisfaction and that we also shall enjoy it, but what a poor benefit it is! How dismally do an author's most individual writings fail to compensate for the human being we have lost! For though we may still perceive *him* through his phrase, what has happened to his perception of us? Just as it seemed that Logan could never have lived anywhere except in St. Leonard's Terrace, looked after for thirty-five years with perfect consideration by his sister, waited on so intelligently by his devoted servant, Hammond, giving out, through all the especially malignant bombings of Chelsea, from his windowless, battered home his untiring and courageous enthusiasm, rediscovering Ruskin and Bossuet, applying to his friends that loving creative curiosity, finding subjects for them, planning how they could fulfil themselves—so it is impossible not to imagine him still living there, in his high study which looked over the Wren gates, "with cloudy trophies hung" to the Hospital that symbolised that 17th century which he had loved so well and helped so much to elucidate, the England of Shakespeare, Milton, Donne, Taylor, and Wotton, for whose sake he had become a British subject. To us who knew him in those war years Logan Pearsall Smith personified an indispensable quality in civilisation. Civilisation will not lose by his death for it has his books, but his friends will all feel less civilised. Who will care now how we turn out, or warn us when we decline, or advise us how to surpass ourselves? This is the real burden of mortality; a human spirit shines out for so long that it becomes encrusted with memories, the oracle of wisdom for a whole tribe, a fountain of humorous affection. "And yet, as with Tolstoy and with Proust, all is slowly changing beneath the unimaginable lapse of time, until suddenly the unimaginable happens; the shears of destiny snap together, the sun goes out, the curtain of darkness falls." And round us, not him, the shades gather.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

THE MISSA SOLEMNIS

ARE there still two opinions about this astonishing masterpiece? In spite of the profound commentaries of Tovey and Rolland, it is probable that doubters linger on among musicians; while as for the general public, the work continues to leave them slightly bewildered. They have no standard of reference, for no other Mass in the world remotely resembles it; they hear it about once in ten years; no gramophone records of the music are available in England, and no adequate set anywhere; and the result is that the work is commonly regarded with more respect than love. It certainly hasn't begun to permeate our musical life as have the great choral works of Bach and Handel; none but the very best choirs can get near it, and you can't recruit a quartet in England to-day who can manage the solo music with any show of confidence.

"But that's Beethoven's own fault," say the objectors; and indeed the extremely high and "unvocal" writing for soloists and chorus is one of the principal charges the composer has had to meet. So far as the chorus is concerned, the charge was met triumphantly last Sunday. To hear the Huddersfield sopranos suddenly launch themselves into the empyrean on the six high B flats of "Qui sedes ad dexteram patris" was to be convinced that, in demanding so much, the deaf Beethoven knew perfectly what he was doing. And though his claims on the soloists are doubtless excessive, we have no right to blame him for the present deplorable shortage of competent singers; the fact is that it becomes harder and harder every day to find singers who can do justice to *any* of the great vocal music of the past.

More serious, however, than the technical objection is what may be called the ecclesiastical one. Beethoven's treatment of the text is passionate, dramatic, "unliturgical": those wild affirmations of faith, those tremendous cries of joy and anguish are far, it is asserted, from the accents of the true believer. For models of the authentic devotional style such critics point backwards to Palestrina, or forwards to Fauré. And there is some truth in their contentions: without discussing the debatable evidence concerning Beethoven's actual religious beliefs, one must freely admit that his temperament was very much unlike that of a devout Catholic. In religion, as in politics and everything else, Beethoven will take nothing for granted; he wrestles with his angel, and in many pages of the *Missa Solemnis* we are spectators of the awe-inspiring struggle. Out of every line of the liturgy he squeezes the most precise meaning; friends are called in to help out his doubtful Latin; and he sets the Creed as though grasping its enormous implications for the first time, passing from one clause to the next with those curious and touching repetitions of the word "et" which Tovey compares to an "astonished stammering."

A conception of the Mass so dramatic and personal as this is repugnant to the ecclesiastical tradition of a thousand years, and yet it is petty, I can't help thinking, to allow a prejudice of this sort to obscure the deep spirituality of Beethoven's approach. If a smaller man were to set the text in such a manner, the result might indeed be distasteful; and by "a smaller man" I mean not merely "a lesser musician." Beethoven's attitude towards first and last things is always profoundly serious, and even in the composition of a Mass he is incapable of merely striking a pious attitude, he still writes from his accustomed standpoint of revolutionary humanism; for example, in that confident modulation into the major key at the words "et homo factus est" one cannot help feeling his consciousness of the dignity, as well as the lowliness, of Man's estate. Humanistic, in a similar sense, is his unconventional treatment of the "Dona nobis pacem"; in a world demented by war the spiritual peace of the individual is not enough—indeed it is scarcely attainable, he seems to say, and he boldly describes his final movement as a "prayer for inward *and outward* peace." The menacing drum-beats and trumpet-calls with which he expresses his horror of war bring

the listener of 1946 extraordinarily close to the composer who endured in a cellar Napoleon's bombardment of Vienna.

I should like to say more about Sunday's performance, but the vast spaces of the Albert Hall obscured the detail, finished off the soloists (including the solo violin in the "Benedictus") and robbed the great climaxes of their physical impact on the ear. The concert was organised in aid of the Henry Wood Memorial Concert Hall Fund, and could hardly have demonstrated more effectively our desperate need of such a building.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RADIO NOTES

Logging disconsolately through Europe in search of an occasional change from the slipshod performance of a Beethoven symphony, or the Scrappidrome or the latest dramatic tribute to a public character—in short, from British broadcasting, I have become increasingly aware of the flood of music of all kinds which pours from the interstices between "home" wavelengths. No doubt some listeners are better informed than I am in this field, but it is particularly vexing to be continually tuning in to the last five minutes of an opera, or a symphony or a quartette, of which the performance is so obviously good that one would have sacrificed much to hear the whole of it. Surely the time has come for British listeners to be given again some kind of regular bulletin of broadcasting activities on the Continent; to be made aware that, despite starvation and political chaos, the level of artistic performance in countries like Germany and Italy has remained astonishingly high. No doubt there is still an inevitable element of haphazard and impromptu about continental broadcasting, but it should not be impossible to collate in advance the most important items projected by the larger stations abroad, and to publish them here in some form approximating to the pre-war World Radio. If this were done, even in the most sketchy manner, we should at least know what to try for; and although the reception might prove in many cases poor, there would be enough exceptions—and even whole passages of clarity within a generally disturbed transmission—to make the venture desirable. Up to the present those stations which I have been able to identify as sufficiently "strong" to be worth attempting include Brussels (321.9 m.), Paris-Villebon (431.7 m.), Sottens (450 m.), Hilversum I (301.5 m.), Rome (309.9 m.), one of the two Milanese stations (368.6 and 491.8 m.), and North Germany (230 m.). Other listeners will probably have had other experiences, and it should in any case be assumed that the wavelengths I have given may differ by anything up to 50 m. from the stated figures, according to the situation of the listener in these islands.

Music of Our Time. M. Ansermet's concert of February 27th will not count among my happiest memories of contemporary music. To judge from this eminent musician's article in the current number of *Horizon*, Swiss composers have during the war been turning out an unbroken series of masterpieces, of which (according to him) Honegger's Symphony for Strings is one of the more conspicuous examples. This work was performed in public over here, some two years ago, and I see no reason to alter my opinion that it was not worth a second hearing. Dry as dust, modernistic as a Utility wardrobe, and totally uninspired, this lethal symphony must have done much to harden the general prejudice against "advanced" musical idioms. Vaughan Williams's *Flos Campi*, though it could be felt to be unduly mannered in style, belongs to an entirely different level of musical achievement; like all really considerable artists, Vaughan Williams creates a world the unquestionable distinction of which was in this case shown up by, on the one hand, Honegger's Symphony, and on the other by Kodaly's *Variations*. These turned out to be an exercise in the purest academism, only slightly obscured by the fact that the Germanic academicians of to-day no longer compose in the style of Max Bruch. What has happened to the once promising Kodaly? I must add that all this disappointing music, no less than *Flos Campi*, was admirably conducted by M. Ansermet, whose baton seems to have lost none of its old magic.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*Sunday, March* 10th. Music Magazine (11 a.m.); French Painting (Welsh, 6.30 p.m.); Concert (2.30 p.m.); The Marooning of Henry Hudson (7 p.m.); Dobson and Young (9.30 p.m.); Westminster Cathedral (10.35 p.m.).

Monday March 11th. Book Talk (William Plomer, 6.20 p.m.); Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam (6.30 p.m.); Benjamin Britten String Quartet No. 2 (11.25 p.m.).

Tuesday, March 12th. Concert (7.30 p.m.); Thurber stories (Midland, 7.45 p.m.); Adela Verne (10.15 p.m.).

Wednesday March 13th. The Reform Bill Debate, 1831–2 (L.P., 3 p.m.); Peter Grimes (6.55, 8.5 and 9.15 p.m.); The Haunted Rectory of Borley (L.P., 9.30 p.m.).

Thursday, March 14th. Plain English (Forces Educ. Broadcast, L.P., 3 p.m.); Talk by Dyland Thomas (11.3 p.m.).

Friday, March 15th. Music for the Voice (Forces Educ. Broadcast, Stuart Wilson, L.P., 10.40 a.m.); Bigger Newspapers? (7.30 p.m.); The Fight Against Typhus (9.30 p.m.); Three American Poems (11.30 p.m.).

Saturday, March 16th. Concert with Ginette Neveu (3 p.m.); Parnell (9.20 p.m.).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Red Roses for Me," at the Embassy
"Romeo and Juliet," at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith

After the first night of Sean O'Casey's new play most of the critics spoke eloquently of the beauty of the diction, contrasting it with that of our own contemporary plays, which rarely rises, even at its most poignant peaks, above lines like "I'm terribly sorry, but I'm afraid I'm terribly fond of you," or "Oh my dear, if only I had understood."

On Sunday, however, our Senior Man wrote of his inability to surrender himself to such beauty in the mouths of the platelayer, the wandering fiddler, and the local atheist. I believe many of the older members of the audience will agree. Is it because the ravishment with which we first hear the beautiful Irish rhetoric intoned in the bewitching accent is a thrill which we never recapture? Is it that the use of character is less imaginative than the use of language? We feel that these characters, the idealist, the fanatic, and the wise peasant are constants not only in O'Casey but in the Abbey Theatre of Irish life; yet we are conscious, watching this dateless play, of a highly contemporary sense of our own discomfort, and find it difficult, as representatives of the downtrodden English, to feel sympathy with the downtrodden Irish, whose land, if not flowing with all the good things we imagine, has yet achieved a reasonable state of political freedom. Or is it that Mr. O'Casey, no longer creating his plays from the life around him, is beginning to spin them out of himself?

"T.R.T.," under the direction of Mr. Basil Langton at the King's Theatre, has started its series of plays and music well. The great Caroline Spurgeon said that the predominating imagery in *Romeo and Juliet* was concerned with flashing light in darkness, the brightness of torches and stars, and love, in the words of the Friar, "like fire and powder, Which as they kiss consume." There is much which shines in this production: much that is murky in the intervals. The lighting itself is not always very correctly aimed, and does not rise to such occasions as the dance of the Capulets. That shadowy moment when Juliet speaks her last words to the living Romeo "Methinks I see thee . . . as one dead in the bottom of the tomb" lose half their effect if Romeo is merely stooging around down stage in normal lighting. The handicap of the permanent set is not counter-balanced by any advantage of speed, and the central area beneath the balcony, most precious to actors, is scarcely used at all. Mr. Langton's melodious Romeo must be counted one of the many failures of good actors in this part. He has not the extreme grace which alone can make good the lack of extreme youth; and he never advances beyond the Romeo of the Rosalind mood, in love with the idea of seeing himself in love. As for the Mercutio, I never thought to see a more fascinating portrait than Mr. Leon Quartermaine's, with its studied economy; but the studied exuberance of Esmond Knight, in long black hair like a rocking-horse, runs it extremely close. On this mixture of good and ill, Miss Asherson's Juliet, true to the boldest and most beautiful image in Shakespeare, certainly hangs like a jewel. In her exquisite youthfulness, her tenderness, and the terrified courage of her passion, are the germs of a great performance.

STEPHEN POTTER

THE MOVIES

"La Symphonie Fantastique," at the Curzon.
"Challenge to Hollywood," March of Time.
"Adventure," at the Empire.

In general I am against translating the titles of French films, but I think that *La Symphonie Fantastique* might very suitably be renamed *The Great Hector Berlioz* or *Love on a Scaffold*.

For consider what Hollywood might have made of the theme. First of all, every known fact about Berlioz would be dismissed as irrelevant; let's get down to essentials! There were women in his life? Good, make it two: blonde and brunette. He loves the blonde, marries her, is unhappy and unsuccessful; but—ah!—hasn't brunette been waiting, ever since that evening when she pulled off one of his coat-tails at the Opera? Of course, and the faithful friend is there to whisper to Berlioz, She loves you. His eyes are opened; maybe she does! And once she'd said how she longed to devote her life to music, which meant more (come to think of it) than singing *La Belle Voyageuse*. So off he tears to the concert hall just to peep from the wings—no doubt of it, she'd loved him all along! This was what his music had been wanting, etc. Period of happiness and triumph. But this is a tragic story, so first she leaves him because his son doesn't approve, and then he totters out from a concert clutching his heart, and they are all united again—true love, faithful friend, jealous son, and the master himself with white hair. Wonderful evening at home; she starts singing a song (one of his), gasps, tries to go on—falls dead! Finale: the heavenly brass and voices, thundering out the *Tuba mirum* in the Cathedral.

What Hollywood might have made of it? This is what M. Christian-Jacque, a French director, *has* made of it; and not only that, but—a remarkable feat!—even the music has been pounded down into the dreariest of pot-pourris. Berlioz himself, as one might expect, remains a figment of legend; though, in other surroundings, M. Jean-Louis Barrault would go far towards capturing the *Jupiter tonans*, the "lark huge as an eagle," of history. The disconcerting fact about this tame travesty is that it should have come to us from the one country which hitherto in its films has preserved a respect for tradition and the arts. Who is M. Christian-Jacque? I only hope there are not others like him in the new France, or Hollywood will have gained ground where we can least afford it.

To ram home second-rate triumphs the new "March of Time" gives a survey of English films which would be libellous if it weren't—apparently—meant as a tribute. What are our assets, in film-making, for the American market? *I Live in Grosvenor Square*, George Formby and *Caesar and Cleopatra*, a few stars that shine dimly, half a dozen new productions which aren't (one hopes) a quarter as bad as their trailers. These, according to the "March of Time," are making Hollywood sit up. Not a hint that during the last six years English films have for the first time successfully asserted a high individual quality.

Lastly, a fitting climax to this voyage through the inane, *Adventure* would be the funniest bad film of years if it weren't roughly a couple of hours too long. Every reviewer has delighted in its final tableau, when the still-born baby is brought to life by Mr. Clark Gable roaring in its ear. But Mr. Thomas Mitchell complaining that his soul has flown out of his breast and seeing it fly home on his death-bed is almost as good, while Mr. Gable brings down Miss Garson in a love-tackle on the stairs that should win its way to many diaphragms. All through, in fact, Mr. Gable is made to snarl and hop like a hungry hyena: poor reward, it seems to me—box-office or no box-office—for an actor returning after years of distinguished war service.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

SIR,—After listening recently in a Freedom Forum to the ominous rumblings of the B.M.A.'s official mouthpiece, and after learning in your correspondence columns how doctors are the flower of our civilisation—a botanical distinction which they seem doomed to lose, O tempora, O flores—I feel bound to protest against the fatuous and irrelevant croakings of these and countless other opponents of a National Health Service. The crux of every discussion seems to be the bogyman threat to the now famous, or infamous, Doctor-Patient relationship. Ask one of the millions of panel patients waiting in the bleak sardine tin of a panel waiting-room what he thinks of the D-P-R when the front door bell rings and his doctor-freely-chosen, of course—scuttles off for an indefinite period to cement a more profitable relationship; ask those who know whether the relationship is equally scrupulous between a 10*s.* 6*d.* patient and a £1,000 p.a. client; ask those who know how much truth there is in the fairy story of free choice of doctor. I have worked for private practitioners in England and am now working for the National Health Service of Newfoundland, which has a country-wide system of State-owned hospitals and State-paid doctors. I know of no more satisfactory system both for doctors and patients, and the D-P-R could be no happier since there is no financial discrimination possible, and at least that temptation to sell varying measures of economic charm and efficiency does not operate. As a matter of fact any doctor worth his salt will not allow his D-P-R to be in any way influenced either by the source of his income or the title of his employer, whether Whitehall, hospital board or senior partner; a doctor should not be a doctor unless he is prepared to give the maximum of attention and sympathy to his patients; human nature being what it is, and not all doctors being the flowers of virtue that R.L.S. considered them, they are more likely to do this when the minimum financial temptations and the optimum equipment are put in their way. This can only occur in a National Health Service.

R. SPICER

Stephenville Crossing, Newfoundland.

CLASSICAL EDUCATION

SIR—Your contributor, Mr. Shawe-Taylor (*N.S. & N.*, February 9th) and the Warden of Wadham agree not only that it is the aim of Classical Education to "create a full man," but also that in general such an education can succeed in so doing. True, the Warden admits that other activities may attain the same ends, but Mr. Shawe-Taylor urges a study of the classics as a prophylactic against becoming a British Israelite, Christian Scientist, Buchmanite or Nazi. If these claims could be accepted the re-education of Germany and rehabilitation of Europe would be simple matters.

The real case for the classics rests on different grounds; authoritary, conservatism, prejudice, nostalgia; the long drawn discipline of strict grammatical rules, the acceptance of arbitrary standards of syntax, the glorification of such scraps of literature as have chanced to survive, and the admiration of the gentlemanly life of a leisured class. Classics were the natural and healthy recreation of English landowners whose survival was dependent on the unquestioned acceptance of their right to their acres and the labour that farmed them and who liked to think of themselves as the Patricians of their country. Scholarship combined with clothing and language, with houses and habits, to build a harmonious whole. An elegant education which did not stimulate them to think clearly about social issues was necessary to such men, and classical Rome and Georgian England were not dissimilar States. But now natural history and gardening, English and French literature, history and dramatics, mathematics and model making are better introductions to the business of the how and why of life.

It is true, as Mr. Shawe-Taylor suggests, our civilisation is soaked in classical tradition. We have substituted a make-believe mythology for the traditions of our own soil, though most of us still prefer Gog and Guy Fawkes to Chloe and Sabrina. Painters, poets and architects have turned to Athens and Rome for inspiration, sometimes with charming results. But now other ways are open, men read Austen and Trollope rather than Virgil and Horace for recreation, and plaster goddesses are not so common. An army of translators and commentators supply most of us with all we need of the dead literatures, but still some day a Tomtopian classicist may be urging the compulsory teaching of English so as to make a full man by the study of the surviving fragments of Shaw and Churchill in the original.

R. WHEELER HAINES

St. Thomas's Hospital,
London, S.E.1.

NON-INTERVENTION IN SPAIN

SIR,—Mr. Valentine Ackland's question, whether, in our dealings with Franco, we are afraid of crossing the Pope, is very much to the point. Adherence to the Vatican is no longer, as it once was, a purely religious emotion, a matter of the individual conscience; it is now something more in the nature of a "political creed and a religious flag." M. Maritain described the alignment of the Spanish hierarchy with the methods and ideals of the Axis as the "Islamisation" of the Christian conscience; and that such alignment is not condemned at headquarters is proved by the speech in praise of Franco and his "munificence" to the Church which was delivered the other day at the Vatican by the new Primate of Spain.

The truth is that—however you may paper over the cracks—there is now, from the very constitution of the Church as a spiritual autocracy, and there must always be, a radical antagonism between the Church and democracy. A temporary *modus vivendi* is possible; but the Church cannot, without self-stultification, approve and fully co-operate with a system the very basic principles of which—the rights of man, freedom of conscience and speech, and even our own *Magna Carta*—it has condemned as "pestilent errors."

21 East Avenue,
Bournemouth.

HAROLD BINNS

GLASS-HOUSES

SIR,—The futility of verbal protests is well illustrated by the history of military detention barracks. Hundreds of thousands of words have been written, and thousands printed, complaining of conditions at those places; but what has been the result? From time to time a committee is appointed to consider the regrettable occurrence at such and such an establishment; if the findings are ever made public, ambiguous reference is made to minor abuses, which may in due course be corrected; but that considering the function of the place, conditions are found to be excellent.

That the inmates of Aldershot detention barracks doubt the efficacy of verbal protest is obvious from the recent disturbance. The military would have it believed that the men responsible for the riots are the scum of the army, but the difference between the military and civilian conception of crime must be remembered: a soldier may be sent to a detention barracks for a crime that does not exist in any civil criminal code; indeed, the detention barracks usually house men convicted of military crimes, such as absence without leave, desertion or striking a superior; while men convicted of more general crimes, which a civilian might be excused for considering more serious, such as rape, robbery or manslaughter, are sent to civil prisons.

In his statement to the *Daily Telegraph*, Lt.-Gen. Sir John Croker, G.O.C. in C. Southern Command, described the complaints of the rioters as "superficial and in many cases quite unreasonable." The principal, but in Sir John's opinion doubtless the most superficial and unreasonable, complaints seemed to be that the men concerned were not given their freedom now that the war is over, and severity of sentence. Bearing in mind that the war for freedom

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KEGAN PAUL

was concluded (successfully, we are told) nearly a year ago and that some of the men are serving sentences of from two to seven years, I find myself disagreeing with Sir John's choice of words. Perhaps seven years, or even seven days, in a detention barracks would modify that choice.

2 Sibella Road S.W.4. COLIN GILLER

FINANCE AND SECURITY

SIR,—It was with some astonishment that many here read of the United Kingdom Government's intention to finance its "National Insurance" programme by means (chiefly) of a flat rate of contribution. In New Zealand the revenue of the Social Security Fund comes from a charge of 1s. per £ of income, including Profits, Interest, Rent, etc. (This is shortly to be increased to 1s. 6d.), The Australian Labour Party do not feel that even this arrangement is sufficiently progressive and their intention is to finance Social Security benefits largely, if not entirely, out of ordinary Revenue (i.e. out of Income Tax).

The United Kingdom plan seems to involve little redistribution of income (except from bachelors to families, and to the extent that costs are borne by employers and the Exchequer). This is particularly surprising in view of the fact that income is in any case far more equally distributed in the two Dominions. Mr. Colin Clark estimated the Pareto Indices for Australia and New Zealand respectively at 2.21 and 2.25 for 1934, compared with 1.68 for Great Britain in 1932. ("Conditions of Economic Progress," p. 425.) This disparity has almost certainly increased over the last few years.

Apart from its effects on the widespread poverty in Britain, redistribution of income would in the long run help provide Full Employment by marrying economic needs to purchasing power. Social Security (or "National Insurance," if we must retain the Coalition Government's term) is a particularly useful way of achieving this, since it has little effect on prices (*cf.* wage increases). Surely this opportunity will not be lost. DUDLEY SEERS

Wellington, New Zealand.

THE PROPERTY OF REFUGEES

SIR,—As reported recently in the press, the Reparations Conference suggested the creation of a fund, to be drawn from German assets abroad and to be used by the Allied Governments for the benefit of refugees, victims of German aggression. Surely an even stronger case exists for not depriving the refugees, by sequestration or confiscation, of their own assets in certain Allied countries. Yet, incredible as it may seem, this is what is being done.

My own experience may serve as a typical example. I voluntarily transferred my domicile from Germany to Cairo in 1934, and finding myself in this country at the outbreak of the war, was recognised by the appropriate Tribunal as a refugee from Nazi oppression in December 1939, and did specialised war work for several Government departments from 1940 to 1945. Needless to say, the German authorities denationalised me and confiscated those of my possessions which I had to leave behind. But on top of this the Egyptian authorities, notwithstanding a certificate of political reliability issued to me by the British Commandant of the Cairo City Police in February 1940, broke my contract with the Egyptian University and sequestrated my whole property there. The delegate to the Public Custodian undertook in writing to return it if I could prove that my property in this country was not confiscated, and this proof, in a statement of the Home Office, was forwarded to him by the British Embassy in Cairo in May 1940. Not only was this promise not implemented at the time, but my documented application to the Egyptian Ministry of Finance, to which I was finally referred at the end of the war, has received no reply.

This cannot be an isolated case, and calls for Government action, in the form of an agreement to exempt from sequestration or confiscation by Allied countries the assets of bona fide refugees who have passed the test of investigation in the countries of their residence, and particularly those who have, in the Allied armies or as civilian war workers, contributed to the Allied effort. JOSEPH SCHACHT

PALESTINE

SIR,—In your editorial comment on the letter by me and Mr. Nashashibi in your last issue, you say "We urged that many more Jews should be admitted to a Palestinian State but have not supported Zionism or a Jewish State." It is not clear whether you want this admission of "many more Jews" to take place before or after the creation of the Palestinian State you envisage. If after, surely that will be a matter for the government of the Palestinian State to decide? If before, then you are indirectly supporting the aims of Zionism, which are that before a Palestinian State comes into being, through which the people of Palestine could effectively express their wishes, an immigration policy should be imposed regardless of the wishes of the present majority, a policy which would seriously undermine the position of that majority and possibly convert it into a minority before the Palestinian State is set up. This, Sir, you must agree, would be a denial of democratic rights to the people of Palestine. The only democratic way of solving the problem is to give the country its independence immediately and let its government decide its immigration policy.

The Arab Office, EDWARD ATIYAH
161 St. Stephen's House, S.W.1.

BY ANY OTHER NAME

SIR,—Whilst I do not like to seem to complain, and the matter is in any case not very important, I think it is worth offering a correction to the Parliamentary report in your issue of March 2nd, in which it is stated that I silenced a Member who was interrupting me when I was interrupting Sir John Anderson, by saying "Shut up, you fool." I wasn't interrupting Sir John, but was raising a point of order of considerable importance; and I didn't say "Shut up, you fool," for the interrupter—who for some reason wanted to discuss my income—wasn't a fool. What I said to him was, "Shut up, you silly old man," and he was good enough to do as he was asked.

4 Brick Court, E.C.4. D. N. PRITT

LIBERATED AUSTRIA

SIR,—I have read with interest the correspondence on Austria in your columns. On the experience which we have had, I think it would be true to say that, speaking broadly and with certain exceptions, the British occupation authorities are anxious to carry through denazification, and that where they fail, it is more often due to their relying on questionable sources of information than to a desire to retain Nazis in positions of authority.

What do I consider, however, is that far too little attention is paid to the positive side of the picture. The corruption of Nazi ideology is far from having been already eradicated in Austria, and it is in our own interests as well as those of Austria herself, that every encouragement and help should be given to every influence which will lead to the propagation of anti-Nazi and democratic ideas. This is far from being the case. To quote one instance, in Carinthia the authorities have refused legal recognition to the Socialist and anti-Nazi Non-Party Youth organisations, on the grounds that they were "political." Surely, precisely what we want to encourage is anti-Nazi politics in Austria; one would have thought that a sane policy would have been to give every possible help to bodies which set out to win the young people—who have most of all been subject to German propaganda—for democracy.

One listens in vain to hear of the British authorities honouring leading Resistance fighters or staging public demonstrations of admiration for past and present Austrian democratic achievements.

"Friends of Austria," H. J. BLACKHAM,
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

ARCHITECTURE is the most obtrusive and importunate of the arts. You can keep out of the way of any works you dislike by a writer or a painter, or even of a musician, now that barrel-organs, alas, have all but vanished. But you cannot avoid buildings. Nobody except a few art-critics and museum employees was obliged to look at the recent Picassos, but millions of us have to look at the disgusting façade of the museum in which they were exhibited. Again, if, for example, I walk from my home to Piccadilly Circus, down the Tottenham Court Road, Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue, my eyes have inflicted upon them a series of buildings rivalling one another in mean vulgarity—the exact expression of the chaotic, money-intoxicated society that has been dominant for the last hundred years. Why, one wonders, all this vexation about unpleasant painting, which is so easy to avoid, and so little about the architecture which envelops our daily lives in inspissated nastiness?

The German bombs had at least the advantage of being undiscriminating; and so they destroyed far more ugliness than beauty. The urban landlords, on the other hand, have for decades concentrated their assaults on what merited preservation. If they are allowed to renew their reckless money-grubbing, there will not be a decent building left in London, apart from a few churches, and these, in turn, will probably be sold, like many of their kind, by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, since churchgoers are less and less inclined to pay for the cost of the edification they enjoy.

Mr. John Summerson's book, *Georgian Architecture* (Pleiades Press, 21s.), is for the most part an obituary. Relics of the city he describes are still to be found here and there, like the occasional columns still erect in the Forum at Rome, but with much less chance of surviving. Most of the buildings shown in his excellently chosen illustrations have already gone. His book is as interesting as it is erudite. It will remain authoritative, and ought to become a set book in every secondary school.

Georgian London overlaps at both ends the period 1714-1830, from which it takes its name. Stylistically it begins with Inigo Jones's Covent Garden in 1631, and persists at least until Barry's Reform Club in 1837. It was never a city comparable in magnificence either of plan or of execution with Rome, Paris or Petersburg. The Glorious Revolution that destroyed autocracy in this country destroyed also the possibility of that glorious town-planning which only autocracy can impose. (Or does the example of Bath invalidate this gloomy generalisation?) London was developed not to gratify the pride of a monarch or a nation, but to enrich a host of speculators ranging from dukes to carpenters. Whereas a Sixtus, a Lewis and a Catharine could order designs on an almost unlimited scale, a Burlington, a Portman and a Bedford were confined by the size of their estates. And so, with one exception to which we shall return, there is nothing princely in the layout of London. Even its individual buildings are usually meagre in scale: the English oligarchs devoted their prodigality to their country mansions, and it is these which, far more fully than in any but a few London buildings, gave scope to the genius of our architects. Nevertheless, the Bedford, Foundling and Belgravian estates are admirably planned. The Georgian squares (which usually are not square) are exemplary, as habitable as they are dignified, and still give London great character. Is there any other great city where so many houses look out upon trees? And here may I recommend a little book called *Art After the War*, by G. D. Hobson (Batsford, 5s.), which puts forward some most sensible general principles for the improvement of the gardens in these squares, together with some highly unsatisfactory plans.

Jerry-building and ribbon development—the plagues of modern speculative building—flourished already, Mr. Summerson shows, in Georgian London; and so did the semi-detached house, but in so felicitous a form that it might still serve as a model. Though the money-grubbers were much less closely controlled than they should have been, especially in the density of the housing, there were Building Acts in 1707, 1709 and 1774 that imposed certain decencies. The speculators, moreover, whatever their station, sought to attract householders by satisfying prevalent notions of good taste.

Mr. Summerson's book contains a mass of information not available elsewhere, but his taste is too much a slave to his scholarship, and he will seem to some readers unduly severe in his judgments. Admittedly Kent and Gibbs and the Dances and Chambers and Nash are not comparable in stature with Bramante, Bernini, Mansart the Elder and J.-A. Gabriel. It is regrettable, moreover, that the baroque and rococo styles hardly appeared in English architecture: the men who might have made good use of them were busy enriching the country with the Palladian buildings that we ought to have had some two centuries earlier; the time-lag due to Tudor and Jacobean insularity was never caught up with. But our Palladian is more than an imitation of Italian work: it has a valuable character of its own. And Georgian London is remarkable not only for the nobler opportunities that were missed but for a good sense in which we may recognise the equivalent of the enlightenment that we admire in Chesterfield, Gibbon and Fielding.

The severe Mr. Summerson may be thought too indulgent to the Adams. Inventive in their plans, and sometimes bold in their elevations, they inclined, nevertheless, to mistake elaboration for richness, and triviality for delicacy. To Soane he does full justice: it is a calamity that the most original of our architects is now hardly represented except by his drawings. Cubitt, again, receives in this book praise that is deserved and overdue. But to Nash Mr. Summerson is much less than fair—and this though he has previously made him the subject of a monograph.

The puritanism that in a variety of disguises has afflicted most English critics of visual art—Walter Pater and Roger Fry as well as Ruskin—crops up once more in Mr. Summerson. The Regent's Park terraces are dismissed as "architectural jokes" because from a distance they might be taken for single palaces instead of for blocks of separate and comparatively modest houses. I wonder how many of us have been disconcerted by any such incongruity between the appearance of these buildings and their function? It may, of course, be my æsthetic insensibility that makes me accept without a pang this ordering of terraces, but Mr. Summerson's criticism seems to be based on just the same old fallacy that made the Victorians condemn a façade by Bernini as a "falsehood." There are various defects of detail in Nash's architecture, but this general conception to which Mr. Summerson objects is informed with genius. Seen through the young leafage in spring, the terraces have a freshness that is anything but theatrical; and is it sensible to blame them because, when ground and roofs are blanched with snow, the moon transforms their cupolas and colonnades into a vision reminiscent of Leningrad? If their utility had been sacrificed to this enchanting appearance, Mr. Summerson would have ground for complaint. But several writers among my friends, who have the luck to live in these terraces, assure me that no houses could be more agreeable to work in.

It is peculiarly regrettable that such prejudices should be given currency at a time when the fate of the Regent's Park architecture is in the balance. A committee is now sitting to consider the problem, which can be reduced to fairly simple terms. The terraces, not very well built originally, have been in various degrees dilapidated by bombing. The houses are many of them too large for modern householders. Furthermore, if they were replaced by mountainous blocks of flats, three or four times as many Londoners would enjoy from their windows a view of the Park. This last argument seems to me hardly worth discussion: the number of people who could be housed on the site of terraces could never be more than a tiny minority in comparison with those who use the Park and the roads surrounding it. To sacrifice the rest of us to their interests would be shamelessly undemocratic. One might as well argue that Hampton Court would be put to better use if the palace were sold to Mr. Butlin and the gardens to the promoters of a greyhound stadium.

The financial argument in favour of rebuilding deserves more serious consideration. Blocks of modern flats would bring to the Crown, which is the landlord, an undoubted increase of income. Although none of the terraces is damaged beyond repair, and the houses lend themselves easily to conversion into maisonettes and flats, the expense of giving them new life would doubtless be heavy. On the other hand, in its combination of palatial architecture with towering groves and lakes and gardens, Regent's Park is one of the happiest examples of town-planning in the world, and the only region of London possessing the dignity appropriate to a great and cherished capital. Nobody can have the effrontery to pretend that any substitute now made for these terraces will possess any comparable beauty. (It is a tragedy that, when all over England so much new building has to be done, the best we can expect of our architects is a regard for convenience and a virtuous self-effacement. Nor is this their fault: they find themselves without a vernacular in which to express their conceptions.) The question then reduces itself to this: is it worth surrendering an increase of the national income in order to preserve a beautiful, unique and irreplaceable scheme? The capitalist answer would be "No." And mile upon mile of dull ostentation or meanness reveal what in the past the consequences of such a view have been. But one reason why we now have a Labour Government is that millions of men and women reject the notion that money provides the one criterion of value, and wish to have done with the greedy and chaotic society based upon this notion. Is the Crown—which in this context means the Treasury—intent upon imitating the other urban landlords? Is profit *ipso facto* more desirable than amenity? Submission to such merely material considerations would lead to their selling the contents of the National Gallery. I do not know what increase of income would result from the destruction of the terraces—doubtless this will be treated in the Committee's report—but obviously it could not be an appreciable fraction of the national revenue. The urban landlords and the German bombers have destroyed a great part of Georgian London. It will be a calamity if a Socialist Government abolishes the most important and delightful of what has blessedly survived.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A POET'S CONFIDENCES

Selected Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke (1902-1926). Translated by R. F. C. HULL. *Macmillan.* 21s.

Great letter writers usually have this in common with ordinary people, that they make some attempt to establish a two-way relationship with their correspondents. That Rilke was a great letter writer, as well as a great poet, few will deny; yet perhaps the most salient impression left by the huge mass of his letters is that of a mind talking to itself. Rilke used his friends as other writers use their diaries, or even their waste paper baskets, so that anybody who was unacquainted with this poet's ambience would get only a hazy idea of it from his letters. With Walpole, Byron, or Keats, we are almost always conscious of the personality to whom they are writing, because the tone of the style differs accordingly. With Rilke this is very seldom so; he hardly ever varies his intimate, highly charged style, whether he is writing to a friend of many years' standing or to an adolescent

admirer whom he has never met. The effect is disconcerting, until we tell ourselves that, since his correspondents accepted the terms of his friendship, it behoves us to do likewise. We shall gain nothing by refusing them: the personality behind these letters is in many ways an exasperating one, but it is such as to make censure appear beside the point. Rilke was an intensely feminine character and his letters resolve themselves into a slowly moving stream of confidences in which what is personal to the man's immediate circumstances, slides, without perceptible change of gear, in and out of the poet's wholehearted devotion to his art.

It is this vital process of interchange which Mr. Hull has been at pains to display. Prodigiously gifted as a translator, he has divided Rilke's life into three phases—a perfectly legitimate proceeding—and has chosen from the great mass of the letters chiefly those passages which bear upon the poetry. Biographical details enter the picture, but are left to take care of themselves. Anyone who wishes to understand the complicated and often mysterious background to these letters must seek enlightenment in the brilliant and perceptive work of Miss E. M. Butler, who supplies a sympathetic introduction to this volume.

In view of the essential nature of these letters it is not surprising to find that almost all the best—the longest, most intimate, most rich and most deeply felt—are addressed to women. Rilke adored women, so long as they were content to remain at a safe distance; and he may be thought exceptionally lucky to have gathered around him, with the minimum of trouble, a quorum of intelligent, sympathetic and patient females (his wife included) who were prepared to accept without complaint the peculiar role he assigned to them. And as one reads the letters one sees that it was worth it; for Rilke had not only a matchless sensibility, an eye like a lemur, and an inexhaustible fund of vivid and (on occasion) humorous phraseology: he possessed also the power to experiment with ideas and images in prose, before transmuting them into verse. His letters, which may begin and end with reference to the addressee, nearly always wander off into what amounts to rough notes for poems. Thus we find, as early as 1907, ideas which later burgeoned into the Elegies:—

> Whilst I was marvelling yesterday at the tenuous and aerial autumn here, you were passing through that other one, native to us, which is painted on red wood as this is on silk. And we can feel the one as much as the other, so deeply do we hold in ourselves the principle of all change, we, the most changeable of all, who go about with the desire to comprehend everything and who (even though we do not grasp it) turn anything that's too big for us into the action of our hearts so that it shall not destroy us.

And it is noticeable that on such occasions Rilke's prose assumes the dactylic rhythm of his favourite metre (the translator has caught this effect most happily).

Rilke considered the *Elegies* his greatest work; he affirmed this so often and so vehemently that ever since his death there has been an open conspiracy to agree with him. Having studied his poetry for seventeen years, I now put forward the tentative suggestion that this view may be mistaken. Only the superficial features of a man's nature suffer change; the kind of person he is—his attitude to life—is fixed quite early in youth, and in Rilke's case the evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that he was a pure aesthete—a rather rare but genuine type of artist who is primarily interested in the sensations aroused in him by the objects, animate as well as inanimate, which surround him. This outlook is obvious enough in the *Early Poems* and the *Book of Images*, but first finds unimpeded and technically mature expression in the two volumes of the *New Poems*. Thereafter the poet, as if aware that the movement of human life was somehow eluding him, set about a Platonic transformation of the universe into forms of thought and feeling upon which the letters expatiate in considerable detail, and which resulted at long last in the *Elegies*, the *Sonnets to Orpheus*, and the final fragments. This was a feat which only an incredibly clever man could have achieved, and it is a fascinating experience to follow, in the letters of 1907–14, the ruthless creation of this complex aesthetic programme. To this remote and ethereal end Rilke sacrificed everything—health, family, friends—in a single-minded effort the inspiration of which he caught from Tolstoy and Rodin but which certainly wins him a place among the dedicated saints of literature. The *Elegies* are indeed a staggering performance; but it is possible, I feel, to doubt their value as *philosophical* poetry and thus to place Rilke alongside Valéry, Mallarmé and Gautier, rather than with Hugo, Wordsworth and Goethe. For Rilke was above all an incomparable observer, as these letters bear constant witness:—

> It was the evening of a very windy day, and the broad gale flung an immense, night-grey continent of clouds across the sky and set the sun free, which sank at once—so that two seas lay there separated by a strip of dazzling light: the one all shadow-grey, veiled over and ponderous, the other burnished, shining, full of motion, that trembled and glittered to the very ends of the earth.

Surely it is in passages like this, and in the poetic evocations of beautiful and curious things which make up the *New Poems*, that Rilke's genius shows at its clearest and least questionable, rather than in the word-thickets of his last creative period.

To those who have not yet made up their minds, as well as to those who have, I cordially recommend this volume. When it becomes possible to issue a complete English edition of Rilke's letters I trust Mr. Hull will be called in as translator, for I cannot imagine a better. His versions of the poems, with which he sensibly illustrates many points of the text, are among the best yet made. As for his selection of the letters, it had clearly to be rigorous and was admittedly made with a view to exhibiting first and foremost Rilke's poetical progress. This has had the result of distorting the perspective in some places, and in others of emphasising the unconscious insincerity and artificiality which were Rilke's besetting faults as a correspondent; otherwise the passages have been chosen with admirable taste and skill.

LIONEL CRANFIELD

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They embark, then, on everything. Newspaper clerics, the Raj, sex equality, proverbs, public schools, Communism, foreign correspondents, even poetry turn up in the first few sessions, with the author's voice predominating. There's quite a bit of making fun—most of it fairly straightforward, but suggesting at times subtleties that shouldn't be missed. It's obvious, for example, that the Communist is a scream; he never opens his mouth without repeating something idiotic or irrelevant. How "patiently," how "sadly," the inquisitor or whatever he is puts up with this twaddle! He himself—we are assured—is flawless in logic and an earnest seeker after truth. When once he gets going he obviously isn't at all easy to pull up. People begin to fidget, chairs scrape. Now where exactly does that, as fun-making, come in? Mr. Brogan is very gently pulling his own leg. Dangerous habit! When he winks knowingly at the reader or indulges in one of his monumental asides—impressing on us, for example, that he has read Baudelaire, though he'd never let on to *them*, of course—how far is that being funny, too? And the whole method seems a trifle ambiguous. Mr. Brogan's favourite gambit is to rap someone over the knuckles for digressing and then himself meander all over the place with the smug inevitability that comes from having written the book.

The opinions, however, scattered about Part I and then rammed home with sermons in Part II, are meant to be taken seriously. Mr. Brogan believes that "the building of a better world is contingent on a return to doctrinal religion": this isn't revealed till p. 85, and then it comes "with a sigh," not for the opinion but for the doltishness of those who won't accept it. He believes further in (1) the family, (2) guilds, (3) property, (4) free enterprise, (5) the little man with his own shop and the workman owning instruments of production. Much of this will be found in Belloc's *The Servile State*, in the writings of the Distributist League. He hates materialism, Social Security, the Left, the Jews, intellectuals, monopoly, the new Education Act, and of course the U.S.S.R., though of these hatreds more are openly avowed than others. And while Mr. Brogan denounces the authoritarian state (especially, of course, in its Russian example) he never quite reaches the point of rejecting dictatorship as such, and indeed by a remark about the unsatisfactoriness of the general vote appears to pave the way for it. A Franco Fascism would seem the inference; and this cat—needless to say—isn't let out of its bag. Instead we are asked to pay attention to the cardinal virtues of Christianity, high precepts which clash a little with some of Mr. Brogan's own manœuvres in controversy.

Indirect Jew-baiting, for example. Mr. Brogan doesn't, like Belloc, roar anti-Semitism; he just calls his Communist "Mr. Levi" and makes him a whining gollywog who has evaded military service and lives on mysterious earnings. That is sly. Compare this method with Mr. Brogan's pulpit tones: "Now, a sense of honour is simply a fine and imaginative sense of justice. Justice is something above ourselves, an idea whose reference is beyond ourselves. It is something to be served, not something to be used, etc." And elsewhere: "Partiality of judgment and wilful blindness to unpleasant facts are very natural, but they are none the less ugly and deadly, and it is the duty of all men, particularly of educated men, to fight against them."

No one would trouble about Mr. Brogan's abuse and polemical wriggling if it weren't that he has, hidden in sing-song rhetoric and paradoxes empty of surprise, something interesting to say. There are acute reflections on mass production, the proletariat mind, the individual soul and the mob soul. Most of all one sympathises—or would sympathise, if the approach were a little less disagreeable—with Mr. Brogan's mistrust of departmentalism. Too often, though, in his chosen arena, he reminds one of the picador who lollops in to a blast of trumpets, provokes a rush or two, and retires with his nag's guts trailing in the sand. Better sport—and better intentions—next time!

G. W. STONIER

THE PROBLEM OF POPULATION

Children for Britain. By GRACE LEYBOURNE-WHITE and KENNETH WHITE. *Pilot Press.* 5*s.*

Population and the People. By W. A. ROBSON AND A COMMITTEE OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY. *Fabian Society* and *Allen and Unwin.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

The Baby Famine. By GEOFFREY PARDOE. *Torchstream Books.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

These books have three points in common; each gives the facts, in so far as they are known, relating to the past increase and future decline of the population, each passes a judgment of value deploring the prospective decline, and each makes practical suggestions designed to arrest or to modify it.

The facts are sufficiently well known. Here are some of the most relevant which I take from *Children for Britain*. Throughout most of their history England and Wales have been populated by between 5 and 6 million persons. In Queen Anne's time we were 5½, in 1800 8½ million. Then came the industrial revolution, with the result that in the nineteenth century we nearly quadrupled our numbers and were 32 millions in 1900. We are now nearly 42 millions. Our peak year will be 1949 when we shall be just over 42 millions; thereafter we shall begin to decline. The decline, at first slow, will become increasingly rapid and in 2039, granted that there is no *further* fall in the birth rate, we shall be just over 14 million. In 2139 our population will be less than 6 million. In 1870 the birth rate was 34 per 1,000; it is now varying between 16 and 17 per 1,000, having slowly risen above the average of the pre-war years which was about 15. Writers on population pick out the net reproductive rate as the key figure. This is arrived at by considering the number of daughters that every 100 women are at any given time bearing and rearing to womanhood. If this is more than 100, the population is more than replacing itself; if less, it is declining. In 1880 the rate for England and Wales was 152; in 1940–42 it was 80.

The causes of decline are also fairly generally agreed. Children, instead of being, as they were in the nineteenth century, an early wage-earning asset, have been for the last fifty years or more a liability, though family allowances and other social benefits may, of course, as the Whites point out, offset this particular cause of decline; the employment of women leading to a later marrying age; the demand by women for a richer and more varied life, inelegantly referred to in the publishers' blurb to *The Baby Famine* as the refusal of "our women . . . to be broodmares at the behest of the State"—a woman who is a housewife now wants to have a good time; she also wants (the quotation is from the Whites) "to take part, for the first time, in social and public life, as befits the citizens of a democracy"; these demands were not made in the nineteenth century nor, it is obvious, can they be met unless the burden of motherhood and housewifery is lightened, if not largely removed—the desire "to keep up with the Joneses" which is furthered by cars but not by cradles; the determination to give one's children a better education and start in life than one had oneself; the shortage of clothes, furniture, baby requisites and above all houses, this last being exacerbated

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by the unwillingness of some landlords to take children; finally, the growing practice of birth control.

Everybody seems to concur in deploring the situation—the Whites devote a whole chapter, half pathetic and half amusing, to a collection of utterances by public pundits, many of them unmarried, in Parliament, in the Church and "in education," in which the disinclination of other people to have children is denounced in tirades consisting in about equal proportions of exhortation, warning and threat—and everybody wonders how it may be averted. A number of economic and sociological reasons for this attitude is given, more particularly in the Fabian pamphlet, which contains as good and careful a study of this aspect of the subject as one could wish to read. Some of these reasons are that on the whole a larger population means a higher income per head; that any rapid change of population is bad and particularly a rapid decline, since it entails an increasing "allocation of resources to the support of persons who will not at any future time make a return in terms of productivity"; that we cannot hope to lead the world politically or even to remain the focus of the empire if our numbers decline; that declining numbers entail a greater proportion of old people, who lack the initiative which a leading nation is required to display, particularly the British nation which, owing to its inflated population, demands a special degree of alertness and initiative on the part of it business men and inventors to keep up its export trade; that if our trade declines, so will our food supply; that we shall become unimportant from the military point of view; that, if we are militarily unimportant, we cannot hope to make to world government that contribution to which our talents and experience entitle us. I give the Committee's summary of the effects of decline in the words of their Report: "A failure to reverse the present trend will probably involve a declining standard of life; a hardening of the political arteries; a reduction in military power; a diminished influence in world affairs; a less adventurous and less vital social life." As for the temporary discomforts resulting from gross overcrowding, these are brushed aside as due to the inadequate planning of our space and our resources. There are not really too many of us, but we bunch and sprawl in undesirable ways. Also, we are told, it is a fallacy to suppose that unemployment before the war was due to over-population. The Committee conclude that "it is desirable and indeed essential in the national interest that the present decline in the birth-rate should be arrested and that the net reproduction rate be restored at least to unity, and if possible, to 1.15 or 1.2."

It may be doubted whether all these considerations are of equal weight or, indeed, whether some of them have any weight at all. For example, if we are fewer we shall not require to import so much food, or to display so much initiative to increase our export trade in order that we may import so much food; it may be true that old men lack initiative, yet we have almost invariably chosen them for our leaders—consider the age average of the present and of the last Cabinet—and we have not done so badly under their leadership; it is not true that only those nations which in a military sense are powerful can contribute to world government and civilisation—consider Greece in the ancient world, and the Scandinavian countries in the contemporary world—unless world government can be carried on only by bullies adopting the methods of blackmailers, e.g., "If you don't accede to my views and further my interests, I shall drop bombs on your cities"; the view that the Empire can be held together by force is manifestly anachronistic; it might well be argued that the atom bomb has turned large numbers from a security asset into a security liability.

In order to arrest the prospective decline the authors of all of these books propose a number of measures upon which there is general agreement. They include the encouragement of early marriage by financial assistance, further reduction of infant and maternal mortality rates, pre-natal care of mothers, health supervision of young children by properly qualified officers, adequate diet, proper clothing, equal educational opportunities, suitable housing, including separate sleeping accommodation for children, establishment of corps of trained domestic helps to be provided by the municipality, propaganda for larger families, removal of fear of pregnancy and so on. Most of these are sufficiently obvious; indeed, they are inevitable items on the blue-print for any Utopia and, no doubt, when Utopia arrives, perhaps before, we shall enjoy their benefits.

When all is suggested that can be suggested, and when all the suggestions have been adopted, it does not appear that the prospect is bright. Here, for example, is the conclusion of the Whites, "If we can prevent a headlong fall in the number of our future consumers, and can reach a stable position before too long, our economic problems ought not to be much worse than they have been during the last 20 years."

As for many reasons I desire a smaller population, I remain comparatively undismayed, except by the reflection that I shall be dead before its advantages can be enjoyed. Reflecting, however, upon the inducements to produce more children which all the authors offer, I find it difficult not to be struck by a paradox of whose implications they seem to me to be surprisingly unaware. In a set of interesting tables the Whites give the net reproductive rates for a large number of different countries. One notices how the birth-rate is low and grows lower in North-West and Central Europe, is high in South-East and Southern Europe, although not so high as it was—except in Russia, where the net reproductive rate in 1933 was 170; one notices, too, how all over the East, except in industrialised Japan, it is very high indeed. Looking at these figures, one gets the impression of a number of nations advancing in echelon in the same direction along a path which leads from peasant rural communities to industrial urban communities. All exhibit the same tendency. When they are poverty-stricken and rural, they have a high birth-rate; the effects of industrialisation increase the birth-rate, but only for a short time. Presently and almost invariably it begins to decline. So regular is this process that one can almost guess a nation's birth-rate by reference to its position in the procession that leads from rural peasant culture to industrial urban civilisation. Nor is the process a new one—one remembers what happened to Imperial Rome.

When we bear in mind the fact that such civilisations as mankind has enjoyed have all been urban, it looks as if there is something about towns, or about industry, or about civilisation or about all three of them which is inimical to babies. What is it? The Whites, as I have said, think it is the demand which civilised women make for a fuller life. But in noting the fact that societies with a low birth-rate enjoy a high standard of living and those with a high birth-rate a low one, they seem to me, as do the Fabians, to ignore the implications of the paradox to which I have drawn attention, for it is precisely where these so carefully devised and so eagerly suggested inducements to have children are *not* available that women have babies in large numbers, whereas in the societies in which the inducements are offered, the birth-rate is low and grows lower, and so far as one can judge this has always been so. My own guess is that nobody has even yet

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attached sufficient weight to the spreading practice of birth control—though this, as the Fabians point out, is less a cause than a means which enables all the other causes to become effective. I should not be surprised to learn that nine out of every ten children who have ever been born into the world have been unwanted or, if that be too harsh a word, unplanned. To most parents living in most periods the question "Shall we have any more children or not?" has not been a question which it was practicable to ask. With the advance of civilisation the practice of birth control has been increasingly adopted, with the result that the choice becomes, for the first time, practicable to ever larger numbers of human beings. In consequence only those babies who are wanted are born. The fact, I suggest, should not cause regret; properly regarded, it is a reason for congratulation. Man may now for the first time be able to plan the life of his societies and to educate his children.

C. E. M. JOAD

RUSSIAN THEATRE

Actors Across the Volga. By JOSEPH MACLEOD. *Allen and Unwin.* 16*s.*

To anyone who has not read Mr. Macleod's *The New Soviet Theatre*, his new book will appear somewhat perplexing and confusing. A third of it is devoted to the early history of the Russian Theatre and the remainder to a very detailed account of what was after all only an episode—the migration of many theatres in the early days of the war from their centres to the lands on or beyond the Volga. Everything that happened between these periods must be sought elsewhere.

We follow the evolution of the Theatre in the nineteenth century in its various aspects: the existence of privately owned Serf theatres (the author prefers to call them "Slave" theatres); the peripeteias of provincial drama and strolling players; the bureaucratic atmosphere of the Petersburg stage and the freer dramatic movement in Moscow in the days of Ostrovsky, the greatest Russian dramatist; and the culmination of all these in the now established styles of the *Malyi* and the *Arts* Theatres. Then we are suddenly plunged into a whirlpool of contemporary facts, figures and names: the movements and wartime repertoires of innumerable theatres, important and not: their *Ensa* or front-line performances, and their repercussions on regional and Republican theatres.

One is impressed by this widespread theatrical activity in a time of great difficulty. At the same time one cannot help feeling that the author has led us into a labyrinth without providing us with a guiding thread to the main trends of the central Moscow Theatres, the most significant after all.

One of the reasons for this may be that the author does not take us much-beyond 1943, by which time the Theatres were beginning to settle down again to normal Moscow life. But as a result many questions of more immediate interest are sacrificed to peripheral detail. We might have been told more about the organisation of the central Theatres and their relationship to the Committee for the Affairs of Art. A more comprehensive analysis of wartime trends and plays would have been useful. Some account of the debates centring round the Kamerny Theatre and the question of Realism might have been illuminating.

Impressive and active as the Soviet Theatre is, its critics are preoccupied with many problems of organisation and "quality." There is a frequent complaint that young actors and producers are sat on by their elders. There is also the puzzling fact that, whereas the Theatre is highly developed and the dramatist has a good audience and royalties in the offing, there are yet very few first class or even good second-rate plays available.

Compared with Soviet critics, Mr. Macleod errs on the side of undiscerning enthusiasm. As an example of this, he refers to Kuibyshev as being "rich in artists and theatres of the first quality." But apart from wartime visiting companies like the Moscow *Bolshoy* or the local Gorky Theatre, which had its points, there was little to justify this spacious remark. The author is also apparently unaware that Katayev's *Blue Scarf*, which he says "became widely popular," was soon knocked off the boards as a "pot-boiler" by a severe *Pravda* critique. Similarly, when referring to Pavel Antokolsky as "a young writer . . . that emerged in the war," the author fails to realise that this young man, born in 1896, is one of the six leading Soviet poets as well as an actor and producer since the Twenties.

In the end, we are left with a vivid enough impression of the Soviet Theatre "on the move" and its vast territorial possibilities and ramifications, but with no clear idea of its wartime contribution as a whole or the problems that beset it.

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TRAVELLERS' TALES

Bride in the Solomons. By OSA JOHNSON. *Harrap.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Sleeping Island. By P. G. DOWNES. *Herbert Jenkins.* 15*s.*

An article in a recent edition of the American magazine, *Esquire*, disclosed the alarming extent to which the world has narrowed even within the last twenty-five years. An American soldier describes there the same Pacific localities and savage tribes which Mrs. Johnson visited just after the last war and of which her book is an account. In those days it was all head hunters and cannibals who had hardly ever seen a white man and certainly never a white woman, among whom every step was fraught with peril and every clearing in the jungle harboured unknown worlds. Whereas now the author of the article in *Esquire* writes of native chiefs everywhere asking for "gum, chum," gleefully pointing to pin-up girls in fox holes, saying "Betty Grable," and generally becoming thoroughly versed in American civilization. Possibly one may be forgiven for feeling sometimes rather like Cleopatra after the death of Antony that there is "nothing left remarkable beneath the visiting moon."

Mrs. Johnson has inscribed her book to "the boys in the armed Services in the Solomons and elsewhere throughout the world," and one gathers that these recollections of her honeymoon trip with her husband, Martin Johnson (the object of which, combining business with pleasure so to speak, was to secure the first authentic photographs of cannibals at their feast) were prompted by the recent quarrel, in these very jungles, of civilization at its literally most explosive—not to mention pin-up girls and chewing gums. There is therefore something curiously nostalgic about her book, a lingering regret at the passing of the Noble Savage. There is also something rather horrifying in the contemplation of the effects of that civilization on the natives, who, in Mrs. Johnson's day, could not even be trusted with a shirt to their brown backs because they would wear it until it fell or rotted from them; and something ironical in the thought that a handful of white men spent their lives once upon a time in persuading the natives to abstain from hunting an odd head every now and again and making occasional Sunday dinners of their enemies. However, Mrs. Johnson's account is full of interest and incident, vividly illustrated by a series of

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remarkable photographs. There are some pleasing pen portraits of Maughamesque characters—of the white trader, for example, whom the climate got down and who took to drink, a native wife and Black Fever; or of the other white trader who was something of a pirate, but always dreamt of building himself a house on one of the islands of which he would then be king. Moreover, one cannot fail to admire the courage of the young girl that Mrs. Johnson then was venturing farther afield than any white woman before her, in spite of all the attempts to dissuade her—even though she takes care never to let you forget it.

Mr. Downes, too, is nostalgic about the Noble Savage—not quite so savage, perhaps, for he writes of semi-civilized Canadian Indians and Eskimos, but of a nobility that inspires him to almost savage outbursts against the civilization to which he must return after his expedition into the uncharted Canadian North and which in turn has doomed the Indian and the Eskimo to extinction. The idea of the barren and bleak north has never attracted me greatly—and Mr. Downe's account of his expedition by canoe through rivers and lakes has failed to make me understand his eagerness to return to it again and again. Possibly it is the desire which remains in many of us to explore virgin territory and to hold back the contracting horizons of the world. The Canadian barrens include one of the few unmapped regions left and for that very reason attract men like Mr. Downes who should by rights have lived in the days of Sir Walter Raleigh and Christopher Columbus.

In fairness, it should be said that Mr. Downes' book is better written than Mrs. Johnson's, and its narrator falls more modestly into the background as part of the shifting landscape he describes.

W. P. RILLA

Outline of English Architecture. By A. H. GARDNER. *Batsford.* 12s. 6d.

The author says in the introduction: "It is hoped that the continuity of architectural evolution has been sufficiently emphasised, for no greater harm can be done than to suggest that the subject may be subdivided into periods neatly labelled 'Lancet,' 'Tudor,' 'Regency,' and so forth." He has certainly achieved his object, and presents a clear picture of English architecture from the eleventh century till to-day. This is preceded by an admirable chapter on "Origins," tracing the important links with the main streams of ancient European and Eastern civilisations, canalised by the Romans.

The author emphasises the influence upon architecture of social changes, an influence that despite such excellent books as the Quennells' *History of Everyday Things*, has been too little regarded. It has been difficult to recommend a book on architecture for those of all ages who, without much knowledge, are keen on the subject. This volume is well suited to older children, and will increase the enjoyment of those who like seeing churches and country houses. Wherever you may be in England you can be sure to find mention of a local building or see its picture amongst the many well chosen illustrations. These, besides some over-familiar examples, include many fresh subjects.

The outline continues to the present day, and here the author steers a dexterous course amongst conflicting opinions and fashions without thrusting forward his own opinions. The reader who has been through the book and traced the growth from Durham Cathedral, via Chatsworth and the Crystal Palace, to the Bexhill Pavilion or the Southampton Civic Centre, is left to form his own opinion as to the future of English architecture.

The International Labour Movement. By JOHN PRICE. *Oxford University Press.* 15s.

Much research remains to be done before any real progress can be made in assessing the failures and successes of the Socialist and Trade Union Internationals. So many of the facts are still obscure, the memory of bitter controversies too strong. At present, the student of international working-class organisation must rely on memoirs, on inadequate and partisan commentaries and a mere handful of specialised studies. But, with the formation of a new and united World Federation of Trade Unions, it is urgent to examine the record of the years after 1918 if this new International is to avoid the rocks on which its predecessors foundered. The main weakness of Mr. Price's book—which is otherwise a serious and valuable study—is that it often fails to indicate, let alone discuss, some quite fundamental issues. By deciding to exclude anything but oblique reference to the Comintern and its Trade Union auxiliary, the Profintern, Mr. Price may have managed to squeeze his material into two hundred and seventy pages, but he has thereby denied it much of the contrast and perspective which would be so valuable at the present time. As his book is intended to be more of an informative report under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs than a critical discussion, this was, perhaps, unavoidable. But it conveys the impression that Mr. Price feels, on the whole, that both the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour and Socialist International did their best in the worst of all possible worlds. This, maybe, was not intended; but the book would have been of much greater value if more attention had been devoted to the critics of the I.F.T.U. and the L.S.I., whose structural and political difficulties are just as much of a warning as their undoubted achievements may be a guide.

With this proviso, Mr. Price's book has a great deal to commend it. His experience as Research Secretary to the Transport and General Workers' Union, and later with the I.L.O., has given him a close familiarity with the relevant material, especially with the actual operation of the organisations he describes. He sets out in some detail the interrelation of the various international bodies and emphasises those parts of their work which seem to him to have particular relevance to the problems of re-creating international working-class organisations under present conditions. His discussion of the necessary changes in aims and methods of work, for instance, is of real value, for it sets out some of the issues which lay behind the debates at the World Trade Union Conferences in London and Paris last year. In part, this book is a plea in mitigation for the Social-Democratic International. But it is not entirely a speech for the defence.

A Handbook of Social Psychology. By KIMBALL YOUNG. *Kegan Paul.* 21s.

In view of the swiftly and vastly expanding social services of our contemporary State administration, this latest addition to the *International Library of Sociology and Reconstruction* is most welcome.

Social workers, students and teachers must find it difficult to-day to keep up with the immense advance in social studies, particularly in the United States. Professor Young has provided us with an extremely useful synthesis of these studies which touch not only social psychology in a narrower sense, but also sociology, anthropology, political science and other disciplines. The author was also able to include recent experiences in World War II which are so essential for any sociological appreciation of phenomena like morale, public opinion, myths, etc. Bibliographies for further reading and well-chosen references enable the student to further pursue those subjects in which he is specially interested.

As Professor Young covers such an immense field he is perhaps occasionally inclined to give a summarised statement when a less clear-cut view might have been more convincing, e.g., he denies the direct influence of motion pictures on conduct. On the other hand he admits the importance of "myths" as images of a society, determining its conduct. This,

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clearly, is somewhat contradictory, for it would appear that films are myth-creating agencies. But such a contradiction, important as it may be, is not detrimental to the considerable practical value of the book.

Week-end Competitions

No. 841

Set by Saint-Loup

Six guineas are offered for six lines in verse thanking a country friend for a present of eggs, butter, or some other delicacy that has become rare. Entries by March 19.

The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, has kindly offered two seats for the Ballet as an additional prize for the Competition set last week.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 838

Set by Roger Marvell

Six guineas are offered for a poem of not more than 16 lines inspired by a Greek statue, vase or coin, and written in the style of Landor or Mr. Auden.

Report by Roger Marvell

The standard was outstandingly high, and it is with great regret that I have been obliged to reject the entries of Ronald Mason, Stanley J. Sharpless, G. de Vavasour, R. A. Gragge, David, L. V. Upward, J. R. Till, Christine Greenfield, Lesley Robertson, Veritas, Constance Sewell, R. J. Plant, A.M.P., Guy Neade, Willy Tadpole, Charles Race, William Bliss, and Shirley Ovenden. I recommend a guinea each to G. J. Blundell, L. E. J., B. H., and R. J. P. Hewison; half a guinea each to M. S. Milligan, Mrs. Scheffauer, Leslie Johnson, and Terence Melican.

THE WINGED VICTORY

Wide-winged with strength and fluent grace
Stands, wreathed in an eternal breeze,
The Victory of Samothrace
As one returned from hostile seas.

Stands not unscathed; for jealous time
Wishing to mar long-lived renown,
Has buried in some distant clime
The head that wore a victor's crown.

G. J. BLUNDELL

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TO THE CHARIOTEER IN THE LOUVRE

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And girt with those spare falling folds for grace,
Upright in old simplicity you stand,
To prove that Stillness need not lose the race.

L. E. J.

THE CHATSWORTH APOLLO

Here is the eyeless, bronze head of an unlucky boy,
Whose body they sold for scrap in Cyprus; was once their sun.
They stare and shuffle on
Like refugees or children.

They search, for a moment, his face, the first truthful map
They drew of what they might be, of the Man who said Yes
When alone. They are unrewarded,
He does not even betray.

He who was sunlight, song, sight has nothing more to see,
Blinded, at last, in New Mexico; has no need to listen
To the last of the Greeks; has nothing
To sing to the self-condemned. B. H.

THE WINGED VICTORY OF SAMOTHRACE

Wings aspread upon the all-but-airborne point of Taking off,
Urgent bosom dinting the wind of Samothrace—
We shall never know her features,
But the wind-blown draperies show her ripe for love
(Pericles the co-respondent and the subject Isles the plaintiff).
Oh Mister Socrates,
How your conundrums tease!

Figurehead upon a ship rushing to destruction—
Pride immarbled—
Out upon the winedark inebriated sea,
With the pressed men at the oars and
Sophisticated rats eroding the garboard:
Angstfrei somatic symbol of an Angstvoll nation.
They gave him hemlock straight,
But by then it was too late.

R. J. P. HEWISON

TO A GREEK VASE

Petals of amaranth are shed
Not on this side the tomb;
The heroic and the lovely dead
To all our pleas are dumb.

Yet Spartan temple, Argive street,
Statue and coin and urn—
In them the past and present meet,
Could we their secret learn.
Chained tongues of clay and bronze and stone!
See, the mute witness stand
Careless, aloof, who may have known
The touch of Helen's hand!

M. S. MILLIGAN

LINES ON A GREEK HEAD

His Jovian head, his calm, benignant eyes,
Serene, remote from human hopes and fears,
Fit to consort with Socrates the wise,
But lo! beneath the curls, a Satyr's ears.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

THOUGHTS ON A STATUE OF APOLLO

Following Homer, those anthropomorphic Hellenes
Insisted on human features for all of their gods,
Not to mention such concepts as night and day.
So the majestic Apollo supplanted
The grisly hawk's head of Horus.

Rigid against the apparatus supporting,
The Egyptian figure could not stand of itself.
The Greeks, not now to be feared, brought a gift of freedom.
And the coarse, grey African stone
Became the white marble of Naxos.

A-whoring after strange, fortuitous idols,
Though fixed to conventional pillars, we wait for a Pheidias,
To shape for our teaching a recognisable god,
Show us that props are dispensable,
And restore to us plastic minds.

LESLIE JOHNSON

THOUGHTS PROMPTED BY THE DISCOBOLUS

Philosophers and homos were walking on the strand:
"If all the girls were cleared away,"
They said, "it would be grand."

From wrestling and the races their faces in a glow
Old Socrates's yes-men
Were standing in a row.

The dialectic nine-pins. Walk up! the show is free,
And when the don has flattened you
He'll give you toast and tea.

He doesn't wear his mortar-board, but Christ!
It's pretty plain
This beefy lad's an Oxford blue
On Franco's side in Spain.

This Greek is Britain's heritage (yes, howl away, you Fates!)
The chesty bloody athlete
Throwing dinner plates.

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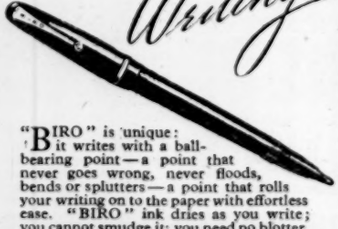

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Appointments Vacant

DIRECTOR of Statistics and Intelligence with special knowledge and exp. of food statistics in national and international field, and able advise on preparation of long-term plans affecting production and consumption of foodstuffs, req. by Ministry of Food. Director would be responsible for organisation of work of statistical officers of Ministry who collect, co-ordinate and report on statistics of particular foodstuffs. Statistical work covers supplies, prices, distribution and international commodity trends. Salary £1,200 to £1,400 together with a Consolidated Addition of £120 a year. A contract of service may be arranged. Applics., in writing, stating date of birth, full details of qualifics. and exp. (incl. a list in chronological order of posts held) and quoting Ref. F.A. (L.), to M. of L. and Nat. Service, London Appointments Office, 1–6, Tavistock Sq., London, W.C.1, by March 18th.

COLONIAL Service. Achimota College: Gold Coast. Vacancies in Arts and Crafts Dept.:—(1) Supervisor to organise and teach, especially to develop training of Teachers of Arts and Crafts for Gold Coast. Preferably a recognised practitioner in some branch of Art with an informed sympathy for African Art. Salary: £400–£840 p.a. Initial rate according to qualifics. Cost of living allowance if salary is below £630; (2) An Assistant to Supervisor, to teach lithography, bookcraft and lettering. Salary £400 p.a. plus cost of living allowance. Both appointments for two years in first instance; free passages, furnished quarters and medical service. Further partics. and application forms from Secretary, (I.E.R./C.A.), Min. of Educ., Belgrave Sq., London, S.W.1. Candidates resident in Scotland apply to Secretary, Scottish Educ. Dept., 10 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, 3. Closing date March 30th.

SCARBOROUGH Council of Social Service. Trained Secretary (man or woman), required for this Society and C.A.B.; one paid assistant. Salary £250/£300, according to experience. Apply for full details Chairman, 13 Elders St., Scarborough.

BBC invites applics. from women only for post of Secretary in French Region of European Services Division. Candidates need not be British. Typing from dictation in French and some translation from French into English involved. Shorthand would be an advantage. Applics. with details of age and exp. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, by March 16th. Mark envelopes "French Secretary."

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S Nursery Training College, Tunbridge Wells. College recog. by Min. of Educ. Wanted: (1) Responsible House Matron for Students' Hostel—36 student Nurses, away all day. In addition to normal duties of hostel (no cooking), willing to train students in House Matron's duties, undertake mending of linen, etc. Post not a heavy one. Salary £100 p.a.; (2) Senior Staff with Nursery Nurse training and practical teaching exp. with student Nurses in Nurseries. Over 26 years of age. Pref. given to those with Nursery School exp., hospital training and those who have held positions of responsibility with children under five during war. Salary according to qualifics. and exp. on approved scales; (3) Nursery School Teacher and Assistant, as soon as possible (non-resid.)—20 to 40 children. Salary Burnham Scale. Apply for applic. forms and partics. to Secretary.

ROYAL Society of Medicine—Assistant Librarian—Salary £250–£15–£400. Degree and Diploma essent. Apply: Secretary, Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St., W.1.

Appointments—continued

THE National Adult School Union seeks the full-time service of a woman of good educational qualifications to assist the work of Adult Schools and to stimulate new endeavour; organising, visitation of Schools and Unions, and assistance at Summer Schools, etc., would be required. Apply Hon. Sec., Gwen Porteous, M.A., 8 Broomgrove Road, Sheffield, 10.

CENTRAL Midwives' Board invites applics. for post of whole-time assistant secretary. Salary will be on a rising scale ranging from £500 p.a. to £790 p.a. Successful applicant required to join Board's Pension Scheme. Applics. must be university grads. It will be an advantage if they have had some admin. exp., but service in H.M. Forces will be taken into consideration. Age limits for applics., 25 to 40 years. Further partics. and applic. form from Sec., Central Midwives Board, 73 Great Peter St., London, S.W.1, to whom applic. should be submitted by March 15th.

Y.W.C.A. of Gt. Britain req. club leaders and assistants for centres for all ages. Applicants expected to take full Y.W.C.A. training. For women with relevant exp. shorter courses arranged. Salaries: Leaders in charge, £240–£270, non-res.; Assistants, £220–£240, non-res. Possibilities of promotion to local admin. posts, sals. £250–£350, non-res. Apply: Personnel Sec., Y.W.C.A. National Offices, Gt. Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

PROVISIONAL National Council for Mental Health. Applics. invited for post of Admin. Assistant in Council's Educ. Dept. Graduate pref., with some organising exp. Salary, £300 p.a. Applics. with copies of testims. to: General Secretary, 39 Queen Anne St., London, W.1, by March 31st.

WARDEN reqd. for Bletchley Community Centre. Scope for interesting development, Women's Choir, Adult Handicrafts, Art Class and W.E.A. lectures, besides Social activities. Hall with good stage, Games Room and Canteen. Small Youth section but emphasis on Adult work. Old People's club with scope for extending this work. Salary £350. Applications to E. J. Fryer, 59 Eaton Avenue, Bletchley, Bucks.

WANTED, for Summer Term, keen enterprising and expd. teacher for group of about 14 children (7–8½ years). Crafts and Games, and other outdoor activities. Resid. post, with scope for initiative. Apply: Principals, Moorland School, Clitheroe, Lancs.

MIDDLE School Master to teach General Subjects. Resident, Burnham Scale. Full particulars to Headmaster, Whittingharne College, Surrenden Road, Brighton, 6.

COMPETENT Secretary required. Typing and shorthand essential. Interest in social, educational and religious work; residential. Long hours; opportunities for Club work, etc. Applications to Warden, Sydney J. Russell, Kingsley Hall, Dagenham, Essex.

COOK-housekeeper reqd. for non-fanatical diet-reform household in country (Essex). To live as family, share musical, lit., and left-political activities if desired. 2 reasonable children. Help given. Box A3777.

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Personal

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IF you have listened to Middleton Murry's broadcast "Man—Illusion and Reality"—you will be interested in his pamphlet "The Third Challenge" (7d. post free) from National Peace Council, 144 Southampton Row, W.C.1.

LABOUR Monthly, March, 1946. India and Pakistan by R. Palme Dutt; Mr. Bevin and British Foreign Policy by K. Zilliacus, M.P.; Unity Then and Now . . . John Horner; The Investment Bill . . . J. Winter; A Square Deal for Women . . . Bert Papworth; also Notes of the Month, Book Reviews. From Publishers: 134 Ballards Lane, London, N.3. Post Paid 7d.

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TRANSLATION (London): 1st Series. Transl. work by 50 poets from Catullus to Cocteau. Translators Blunden, Marsh, Heath-Stubbs, Watkins, etc., 2s. 15 Newton Ct., W.8.

Company Meeting

BRITISH TYRE AND RUBBER COMPANY.

THE twenty-second annual general meeting of the British Tyre and Rubber Company, Ltd., was held on Monday, 4th March, in London.

Sir Walrond Sinclair, in the course of his speech said:

The net profit comes out at £218,131, an increase of £16,574 over the previous year, and is closely related to a higher income received from subsidiaries, due to a wider spread of business.

Last year I reported an income from our shareholding in subsidiaries of 8 per cent. gross or 4 per cent. net. This year the return is still higher, and exceeded 5 per cent. net. Your board have thought it prudent to increase by £10,000 to £25,000 the provision for contingencies and future taxation, whilst the transfer of £25,000 again this year brings the general reserve up to £375,000.

Throughout the war years the distribution on the ordinary capital has been maintained at 11 per cent., less tax, but this time your directors felt justified in raising the total distribution to 12 per cent. by a final payment of 8½ per cent.

Shares in subsidiaries have been reduced by £38,807, due to the disposal of our shareholding in the South African company.

Current assets at £1,765,377 show an increase during the year of £174,252. General reserve and unappropriated profits have risen by approximately £30,000 to £1,654,369. The surplus of current assets over current liabilities, including the provision for dividends, amounts to £747,104, compared with £685,215 a year ago. The balance-sheet totals have expanded during the year from £3,158,745 to £3,317,549.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

Company Meeting

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

RAILWAYS PROUD RECORD

THE annual general meeting of the Great Western Railway Company was held on 6th March in London.

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Portal (the chairman), said that the amount available for dividend was £5,755,705. That enabled them to recommend a dividend of 3 per cent. for the half year ended 31st December last, making 5 per cent. for the whole year, with a carry forward of £209,365. The dividend was one-half per cent. in excess of that paid for the three previous years and the carry forward had been reduced by £42,670.

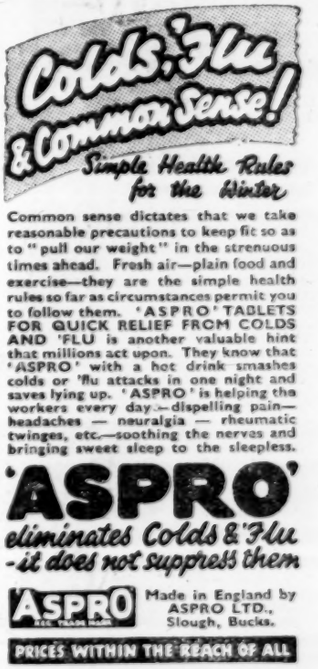
Since the cessation of hostilities they had been giving special attention to the many problems which arose in connection with the reversion to peace conditions and the provision of improved train services and other facilities. After six years of war, during which they had dealt with the largest volume of traffic in their history, but were unable to maintain their lines and rolling stock to the customary standard, improvements could only be effected gradually, and it would take some time to restore their pre-war services and operate them with their former efficiency.

NATIONALISATION PROPOSALS

The Lord President of the Council announced in the House of Commons on the 19th November last that it was the intention of the Government during the life of the present Parliament to introduce measures designed to bring transport services essential to the economic well-being of the Nation under public ownership and control. The objects which the Government hoped to achieve and the reasons which had actuated their decision must necessarily remain a matter of conjecture until a Bill had been introduced. The Lord President of the Council, when broadcasting to America last August, was reported to have said that there was only one justification for either nationalisation or private enterprise—that was efficient service in the interests of the Nation, if only nationalisation would secure that result then they must nationalise, but if private enterprise could do it, then let private enterprise remain. If that was to be the test, neither the record of the railway companies nor the experience of nationalisation of railways in other countries would justify the policy which the Government proposed to adopt. Both under peace and war conditions the achievements of the British railways could be looked on with pride and satisfaction.

They felt they could fairly claim to have fulfilled their primary duty which was to give efficient services to the public under both peace and wartime conditions, and that in that respect they had observed the conditions which the Lord President of the Council had stated would justify the Government in allowing any industry to remain in the hands of private enterprise. Whatever might have influenced H.M. Government in deciding that their proposals were desirable in the national interest, there must inevitably be grave doubts amongst the users of the railways and the staffs employed in operating them as to the need for such a fundamental change as would be entailed by nationalisation.

The report was adopted.



Common sense dictates that we take reasonable precautions to keep fit so as to "pull our weight" in the strenuous times ahead. Fresh air—plain food and exercise—they are the simple health rules so far as circumstances permit you to follow them. 'ASPRO' TABLETS FOR QUICK RELIEF FROM COLDS AND 'FLU is another valuable hint that millions act upon. They know that 'ASPRO' with a hot drink smashes colds or 'flu attacks in one night and saves lying up. 'ASPRO' is helping the workers every day—dispelling pain—headaches — neuralgia — rheumatic twinges, etc.—soothing the nerves and bringing sweet sleep to the sleepless.

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